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A PRACTICAL
PARAPHRASE
On the SEVEN
CATHOLICK EPISTLES:

After the Manner of the Late

Reverend Dr. CLARKE's

PARAPHRASE on the Four
EVANGELISTS.

Useful for FAMILIES.

ACTS xvii. 11. *These were more noble than those of
Thessalonica, in that they received the word with
all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures
daily.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. NOON, at the *White-Hart* in
Cheapside near *Mercers Chapel*.

M. DCC. XXXIV.

A PRACTICAL
PARAPHRASE

OF THE SEVEN

CATHOLICK HISTORIES

AND THE HISTORY OF THE

REVENUE OF THE CATHOLICK

PARAPHRASE OF THE FOLD
EVANGELISTS

USEFUL FOR FAMILIES





THE PREFACE.

THE very great benefit I receiv'd from reading the late reverend Doctor Clarke's paraphrase on the four Evangelists (which I now earnestly recommend to the careful perusal of every serious christian) put me on writing the following paraphrase on the seven Catholick Epistles. It was originally design'd only for the use of my own family; the reason of its appearing now in publick is the hope that it may be of some advantage to the unlearned reader; as to the more learned part of the world, it can be of no other service to them, but to excite them to a more perfect work.

As the design of this paraphrase is chiefly practical, so I have avoided, as much as possible, all nice and speculative views; and have no further touch'd upon them, but just to give the sense of the authors as well as I was able. I am indeed sensible I differ in my opinion from several much more knowing and judicious persons than myself, as to the persons to whom the two epistles of St. Peter were wrote; they supposing them to be the converted Gentiles, whereas I think they were wrote to the Israelitish nation, particularly the dispers'd ten tribes. The first of these opinions was also mine when I sat down to paraphrase them; but when I consider'd the apostle Peter was more immediately the apostle of the circumcision, that he quotes those predictions of Hosea as fulfill'd in their conversion, which only can relate to the Israelitish nation, that he addresses to them as strangers in the nations in which they were dispers'd, and by the name of lost sheep, which most immediately refers to the apostate house of Israel; I alter'd my judgment, and gave it another turn, which runs thro' the whole paraphrase. But as this is a matter of pure speculation, and the precepts in those epistles equally oblige both Jew and Gentile on their becoming christians, I think it of very small importance which is the truth; nor shall I trouble the reader or myself any further about it.

Christianity is a fervent call of a fallen order of beings, to repentance, holiness and obedience; the christian religion is contain'd in the New Testament; the examining the authors themselves is the way to understand that religion,
and

The P R E F A C E.

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and by carefully perusing their works, we are to find out what was their own sentiments at the time of their writing. Whoever pursues this method will find the apostles minds wholly intent upon their work, their breasts glowing with love to their master, and zeal in promoting his laws; and therefore tho several beautiful views are thrown into their works by the bye, yet practical religion is the main design of the gospel, in which plain laws are clearly laid down, and inforc'd by the strongest sanctions; eternal life or death, being made the consequence of our actions; and which affords us at the same time the most comfortable and assur'd hope of pardon and forgiveness, on repentance and reformation.

I have endeavour'd to the utmost of my power to represent things as they were in the apostles minds while they were writing, nor have I either added to, or diminish'd from what appear'd to me to be their sentiments; yet I am very sensible of great defects in this Work, which no man would be more glad to see mended than myself; tho I may say they are of such a nature as can do no real prejudice to the honest enquirer, as at worst affecting only some speculative notions, but no way misleading in those more weighty points of the law, love to God, and the love of our neighbour: Besides, I desire no man to follow me implicitly, but to see with his own eyes, which he will best do when the text and paraphrase are plac'd before him in one view: and further, this may put several into a method of examining for themselves, which without it they might never have fell into.

That

That this work may be a means of awakening both myself and others to a thorough sense of our duty, and to a more close attention to the laws of Jesus Christ our king and head under the supreme God and Father of all, in order to a diligent and uniform practice ; is the sincere prayer of the author.



A



an other Leaf at y^e End of this Booke, where this should be
places —

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A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

General Epistle of St. *James*:



CHAP. I.

Afflictions for the sake of the gospel matter of great joy; patience under them, and how we are to ask it of God, ver. 2. Temptation to sin not from God, the giver of all good; but from our own lusts, ver. 13. We should attend to God's law, should avoid strife and anger, and all evil passions; should receive the gospel with meekness, and should regulate our actions by it, ver. 19. Who is truly religious, ver. 26.

1. **I** *JAMES*, set apart to the Service of the one supreme God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord and Lawgiver; for the spreading of the laws and doctrines of the gospel: that I may most effectually perform this service, send this epistle to you my brethren of the twelve tribes of *Israel*, who are dispersed throughout the known world; wishing you eternal life and felicity.

1 **JAMES** a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scatter'd abroad greeting.

B

2. Par-

2 My brethren,
count it all joy when
ye fall into divers
temptations;

3 Knowing *this*,
that the trying of
your faith worketh
patience.

4 But let pati-
ence have *her* perfect
work, that ye may
be perfect and entire,
wanting nothing.

5 If any of you
lack wisdom, let him
ask of God, that giv-
eth to all men libe-

2. Particularly I address myself to you, my brethren, who with honest minds have embraced the Christian Religion; and who on account of your most holy faith are exposed to the rage and malice of wicked and ungodly men: exhorting you to sustain all the evils you may be exposed to, with resolution and cheerfulness; since if duly consider'd, they are so far from being a cause of concern and sorrow, that they are a just reason for the greatest joy and exultation.

3. And indeed you ought not to be ignorant, that God in his all-wise providence permits you to be exercised with these sufferings, as so many trials of the sincerity of your faith, and obedience; under which if you behave as you ought to do, they will beget in you, a submissive and resign'd temper of mind, a disposition absolutely necessary for the support of the Christian life.

4. But then be sure to cultivate this disposition with the utmost care; and divesting yourselves of all wrath, anger and peevishness, possess your breasts with meekness, patience and love; and having the laws of Christ always before your eyes, exercise the utmost kindness and compassion, to those who hate you, and persecute you; whereby you will become perfect Christians, and attain to the dignity of coming nearest to God himself, who is kind even to the evil, and unthankful.

5. And know this for your exceeding great comfort, that if any sincere Christian finds himself ready to faint under his sufferings, and fear-
ful



ful left, prest by the severity of his trials, he should forfeit his integrity; and for want of prudence and resolution blemish his most holy religion; he may assure himself, if with humility he implores prudence and understanding of God, how to behave himself; that God, who of his great goodness bestows on us all the blessings we enjoy, seeing his sincerity and humility, will neither upbraid nor reject him for his weakness; but kindly give him all that support and assistance, which is necessary for him.

6. But let his petitions, which he puts up to God, flow from a faithful mind, resolute thro' the divine aid to preserve his integrity; for the man who is irresolute, whether he shall preserve his integrity in the day of trial, will soon give up his religion, and become a prey to every temptation, which he will no longer be able to resist.

7. For by that very irresolute disposition, he throws himself out of the divine protection, and disqualifies himself for the reception of that aid and assistance, which God is always ready to bestow on the sincere, tho weak Christian.

8. For 'tis impossible that a man, who is uncertain in his own mind, should steadily pursue any valuable and great design; for the man who is unsteady in his thoughts, will also be unsteady in his actions.

9. And whereas the persecutions to which your steady adherence to the Christian Religion exposes you, are a real subject for joy and triumph; so in particular let the Chri-

rally, and unbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.

8 A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted.

stian who from a low station becomes impoverished, and destitute of the very necessarys of life; let him, I say, rejoice with exceeding joy; since these very sufferings will raise him to the most exalted state he is capable of; in that his faith has made him rich in good works, an heir of the kingdom of God; and intitled him to be a partaker of that glory, which shall be revealed in the day of righteous retribution.

10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

10. So also let the Christian of an higher station, rejoice, in that he is stript of his superfluities, and reduced to the lowest rank of life; as knowing, that God of his unspeakable goodness will bestow on him those true riches which are of everlasting duration, and thereby abundantly recompense the loss of these perishing riches, which fade and disappear as the flower of the grass before the scorching rays of the sun.

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, *but* it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

11. For as the flower of the field fadeth, and as the grass withereth, thro' the intense heat of the sun; whereby its beauty is lost for ever; so shall the rich and powerful be deprived of all their boasted wealth, and greatness; which once lost will be of no further advantage to them.

12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

12. But he is indeed a happy person, who patiently resigning himself, and all he possesses, to the will of God, submits to all manner of temporal evils, for the sake of religion and virtue; and rather than give up his integrity endures the utmost rage of cruel and ungodly men: he shall stand approved in the day of judgment, and with the greatest applause,

plause, shall receive the highest reward, even a crown of life and immortality, which God who cannot lie, has promised by Jesus Christ, to all those, who by steadily obeying his laws, demonstrate their love of him.

13. But as to those temptations, which arise from a depraved disposition, bad examples, and vicious habits; these are to be consider'd in a very different light, from those outward afflictions which God permits for the trial of our faith, and exercise of our patience; these being the springs of all the disorder in the moral world: therefore let no Man say, that these irregular desires are trials sent him by God, and therefore to be submitted to; for as God is infinitely perfect, and cannot in the least be turn'd aside from what is absolutely wise and just, so he will not do any thing, which may be a means of betraying any man into vice and folly, either by implanting in him such passions as he can't govern, or giving him up to the power of any other being.

14 & 15. But the temptations which a man is exposed to of this kind, are from his giving way to his own irregular desires, and appetites; which when the mind once listens to, and entertains with pleasure, it loses its innocence, and becomes faulty, as being prepar'd to put them in practice on the first opportunity: which when put in practice, we come under the penalty, death; and nothing more remains, but the fearful expectation of having the sentence pass'd, and executed upon us.

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16 Do not err,
my beloved brethren.

17 Every good
gift, and every perfect
gift is from above,
and cometh down from the
Father of lights, with
whom is no variableness,
neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will
begat he us with the
word of truth, that
we should be a kind
of first-fruits of his
creatures.

16 & 17. My dearly beloved brethren, be very careful not to impose upon yourselves, in a matter of so great importance; nor imagine that vice and disorder can proceed from an infinitely wise and pure being. No! nothing can proceed from him, but what is fit and right; for he is not only the author of every good and perfect gift, as being that supreme one, who made us, and has endow'd us with all our powers of understanding and reason; and also of his great bounty hath afforded us revelation after revelation, for our instruction and reformation; but is also invariably good, and without the least shadow of change from the eternal and unalterable Laws of truth and righteousness: He is therefore so far from tempting any man to the commission of what is evil, that he will not only support all who trust in him under those sufferings, which he may permit them to be expos'd to, for the trial of their love, and the perfecting their habits of submission and patience; but will also assist by his Holy Spirit, all who from a sense of the obligations they are under, oppose the first rise of those irregular desires in the mind.

18. Of which great goodness, we *Jews* ought to have the highest sense, who have been in so particular a manner favour'd by God from time to time, with notices of his will: But now he has call'd us in the most powerful manner to holiness and obedience, who of his free mercy and favour, hath by his only begotten Son, (that most perfect teacher
of

of truth and righteousness) adopted us the children of God : which character we are prepar'd for, by the secret, and invisible influences of the Holy Spirit : that so being set apart to the immediate service of God, we might open the way for the spreading of the everlasting gospel throughout the world.

19. Seeing therefore, my beloved brethren, we are taken into the family of God, and adopted his children by Christ Jesus, let us with the greatest diligence attend to his laws ; and be much more careful to understand our Religion, and practise it, than to make it a subject of ostentation and dispute : But above all things, let us take great care that we do not use it as an occasion of strife and contention, from whence no good consequences can flow.

20. For anger and passion are directly opposite to that temper of mind, which the gospel requires ; and therefore can have no tendency to promote that disposition of peace and righteousness, which alone God will approve.

21. Wherefore seeing God has raised us to such an exalted station in his family, let us be very careful to mortify our sensual appetites and affections ; and divesting ourselves of all anger, malice, and evil-speaking, let us with meek and teachable dispositions add to our former light and knowledge, a diligent attention to that compleat revelation, which God has made us by Jesus Christ, which will purify our minds, and fit us for that eternal salvation, which God hath brought to light, by the gospel.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

22. But

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass :

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and brid-

22. But do not mistake me ; as tho the bare knowledge of the Christian Religion would procure you the favour of God, and everlasting happiness : No ! he who thinks that any thing, but holiness and obedience, will be of any service to him, miserably imposes upon himself.

23 & 24. And the man whose religion consists in speculations and opinions, without attending to the righteous laws of God, and obeying them ; can't be better describ'd, than by comparing him to one, who entertains himself, and is pleased with his own image, which he beholds in a mirror ; but as soon as he withdraws from it, the agreeable idea disappears with the image ; and he concerns himself no further about it.

25. But he is a Christian indeed, who carefully attends to the great design of the gospel, not only in delivering us from the burden of *Judaical* rites and ceremonies ; but in freeing us both from the terrors of past sins thro' the redemption of Christ, and from the dominion of our passions and appetites for the time to come ; and accordingly conforms himself to a regular practice of the laws of Christianity, and continues steady in his obedience ; that man, answering the great end of Christ's coming into the world, *viz.* the recovering us from sin and folly, to holiness, righteousness, and temperance, thereby becomes a child of God, and is entitled to the Christian Salvation.

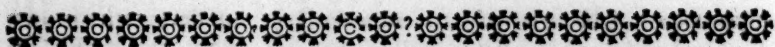
26. But let a man's pretences to knowledge be ever so great, and let him boast ever so much, of his being the

the peculiar favourite of God, on the account of his sublime speculations ; if that man gives up himself to his passions, and indulges a bitter and implacable temper ; he knows nothing of the kind design of the Christian Institution, but miserably imposes upon himself, in thinking, that a fiery zeal for opinions will supply the place of love and obedience ; and his religion will be so far from being to his advantage, that it will increase his guilt, and heighten his condemnation.

27. For that religion which alone God will approve, at the day of judgment, consists not in wrath and bitterness, but in doing all the good that is in our power, aiding and assisting all that stand in need of us, particularly the fatherless and widow, who having lost those relations, which were their immediate support and comfort here, demand our utmost care and regard : And also in suppressing the very first rise of all our violent passions and irregular desires, and thereby preserving ourselves from all insolence of behaviour, and from every unrighteous action, (which always proceeds from an inordinate love and esteem for the things of this present world) that so cleansing ourselves from all Defilements of flesh and spirit, we may pass thro' this state of probation, with meekness, purity, and goodness.

leth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.



C H A P. II.

Against respect of persons, partiality towards the rich, and despising the poor, ver. 1. Impartial obedience to God's law required of us, ver. 10. Necessity and excellency of mercy, ver. 13. It is a vain thing to boast of faith where there are not suitable works, without which, faith is a dead and useless thing, ver. 14.

1. **M**Y brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ *the Lord of glory*, with respect of persons.

1. **M**Y dearly beloved brethren, being convinced that these temporal riches are fleeting and perishing, and that the possessor will be in a little time, as tho' he had never enjoy'd them, and that the glorious doctrines of Jesus Christ our Lord and lawgiver, lead us to the steady hope of those durable riches which will never fade, and that he will exalt to an inconceivable glory, all who sincerely obey him; whether rich or poor: Let us under the direction of so perfect a rule, act in all our affairs with the strictest justice and equity, not suffering ourselves to be byas'd by any worldly advantage, which one man may possess above another: And particularly I exhort you carefully to avoid the very appearances of partiality, in all cases wherein you are to decide between man and man: The reasonableness of which let me illustrate by the following instance.

2. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in good-

2. Suppose when seated in judgment (either on civil or religious affairs) you have a cause to determine between a man of ability and power, and

and one who is poor and necessitous; the first appears richly cloathed, attended with all the advantages of worldly grandeur, the other meanly apparelled without a friend or any outward circumstance to recommend him :

3. If you, upon their coming into your presence, should shew a particular respect unto the rich man, on the account of his splendid appearance, and immediately distinguish him by appointing him a place of honour and dignity, and at the same time treat the poor man with contempt, assigning him the most ignoble place :

4. Do not you by such a procedure discourage your poor brother, by making a difference between the two contending persons from a circumstance which has nothing to do with the present case ? and are you not justly chargeable with partiality, and do you not shew that you are govern'd in your determinations, by false and wicked principles ?

5. Attend to me, my beloved brethren, what reason is there that a man in a low state of life, should be despised on account of his poverty ? Has not the supreme Being from whom every good and every perfect gift proceeds, in a particular manner own'd the poor of this world by pouring out his Spirit upon them ? and are not they, who from their firm belief of the great truths of Christianity have renounced this present evil state of things ; are they not, I say, become heirs of that everlasting kingdom of righteousness which God has promised by *Jesus*

ly apparel, and there come in also a poor man, in vile raiment ;

3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place ; and say to the poor, Stand thou there. or sit here under my footstool ;

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts ?

5 Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him.

Christ, to all who demonstrate their love of him by obeying his holy precepts?

6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seats?

6. Yet notwithstanding the great plainness of these important truths (which are exemplify'd in the very life of our Saviour himself, who appear'd in a very mean and humble estate, not to mention his apostles and followers) ye have been guilty of this very great crime, and have partially determined in favour of the rich; and consequently have oppress'd and slighted the poor and needy.

How is it ye can act after this manner? Do but look around you! where is it you find the greatest injustice? In the poor or rich? Are they not the men of wealth and power that injuriously treat you, dragging you before their judgment-seats on the account of your most Holy Religion?

7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

7. Don't they revile and speak evil of our most dear Lord and Master, by whose worthy name we esteem it our greatest glory to be call'd? How then, my brethren, can ye be guilty of such manifest partiality?

8 If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self, ye do well,

8. Let me therefore excite you with all diligence to attend to that glorious law of universal love and benevolence, delivered to us by our Lord and Saviour, when he was about to give up his life for us; which may justly be called the great or royal law, as raising us nearest to the best of beings, whose actions are all equal, just and good: Which law was also perfectly given by *Moses*, to our forefathers, and is in part contain'd in the second table of laws given by God

God to our nation ; which if you observe you will act as you ought to do, and determine in all judicial causes with truth and equity.

9. But if neglecting this great law you suffer yourselves to be influenc'd by any partial views in your judging between man and man, you shall by this law be condemn'd, and punished as evil doers.

10. Do not deceive yourselves, it is not a partial, but a universal obedience which God requires, and he who breaks one precept, disobeys that God who gave the whole ; and thereby becomes a transgressor of the universal law of righteousness.

11. Which great truth, that you may see in the fullest light, as being of the utmost importance ; consider that it is the very same governour and lawgiver who saith , Thou shalt not commit adultery, that says, Thou shalt not kill : Which authority you oppose by being guilty of murder, tho you don't commit adultery ; whereby you become liable to the penalty of the whole law.

12. But you who by the gospel of Christ are freed from the burthen of all the *Judaical* rites, and from the more dreadful bondage of your irregular passions and appetites ; let all your words and actions be conducted agreeably to the eternal laws of truth, righteousness, and mercy, as knowing that we ourselves shall be judged by the same laws.

13. I say mercy ; for what can be more reasonable than that we who stand in need of mercy ourselves, should shew mercy to our brethren ? And depend upon it, that the man

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy ; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

who

who refuses to shew mercy to others, shall not meet with it himself when he shall most of all want it, when he shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; whose whole dispensation is founded on divine mercy; which therein apparently triumphs over strict and rigid justice. How then can we expect to receive mercy ourselves, if in our hearts we are estranged from it?

14 What *doth* it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

14. And whereas there are some of you who boast of your great attainments in divine mysteries, and who esteem yourselves as highly in the favour of God on the account of the excellency of your faith, as tho that alone would recommend you to him; this doctrine is so far from truth, that it subverts the whole design of religion. And since all religion consists in obeying the laws of God, what advantage can any speculative notions be to us, if they do not influence our actions? Is it possible that such a belief should recommend us to the righteous governor of the world? If you can entertain so absurd an opinion, examine it, and see how it will answer in other cases.

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food;

15. Suppose a near relation, a brother or sister, should stand in need of rayment to cover them, and want a supply of provision for their immediate subsistence.

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed, and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body: what *doth* it profit?

16. I demand of you, if one should in the kindest manner salute them with a wish of peace, and intreat them to be warm'd by putting on suitable apparel, and bid them be fill'd with such food as is convenient for them; and at the same time provide them with neither food nor cloathing:

17. Of what advantage would all your compassionate expressions be to them? Even so far and no farther will a man's faith, without it produces proper effects, be of service to him: For a belief which does not regulate our actions is as useless and unprofitable as good words would be to a person in distress, without the affording him proper relief.

18. But further, how justly might one say to such a man, you make great pretensions to knowledge, and value yourself upon your belief, as tho it made you a favourite of heaven; now in my life and actions I shew you those real good works which my steady belief of my being accountable to God ought to produce. I therefore desire you would give me some evidence of the reality of your faith which has not works to demonstrate it, and make it as reasonable for me to believe the sincerity of yours, as my life and actions answering to my belief, make it reasonable for you to believe the sincerity of mine: I ask whether the question alone does not fully expose the falseness of such an opinion?

19. But to proceed; he will perhaps say, he believes there is one God supreme over all, who will determine the state of all his creatures. So far he is in the right. But what then? does the bare belief of this great truth entitle you to his favour? no. I tell you the very wicked and malicious spirits who are reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day, believe it more firmly than you; and at the same time are so far from being approved

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble.

by

by it, that the very thoughts of it, fill them with inexpressible horror, as you also would be, were your faith but equal to theirs, while your actions are so contrary to it.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead ?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar ?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect :

23 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness : and he was called the friend of God.

20 & 21. But oh foolish man ! would you be convinced that that faith which produces a suitable obedience will alone be accepted of God ; reflect with yourself on the character of our father *Abraham*, in whom we all justly glory : He was honour'd with the character of being the friend of God. And what was it intitled him to that character, and rendered him approved by him ? Was it not his obedience in consequence of his faith, who refused not to offer up his beloved son *Isaac*, (*Gen. xxii.*) to whom all the promises were made, in the sure belief that God would make good all those promises to him, by raising him from the dead ?

22. This eminent example plainly shews what a true faith is ; to wit, such a belief as produces the proper actions, which that belief points out to be right ; and the performance of those actions, demonstrate the sincerity of that belief.

23. And it was by this very obedience that *Abraham* made good that character which the scripture gives of him, *viz.* That he believed God : (*Gen. xv. 6.*) Which faith, producing proper effects, was accepted by God : who on his ready compliance with his command to offer up his dearest son *Isaac*, in the steady belief that he would make good all his promises to him, own'd him as a truly religious person, and one who sincerely fear'd him ;

him; and in consequence of that obedience, honour'd him with that glorious character of being the friend of God. (*Isaiab* xli. 8.)

24. So that trace this matter as far as you are able; you will always find that the faith which God accepts is alone such a faith as influences the whole life and actions.

25. But to give one instance more, what was it saved *Rahab*, who once had lived a loose and profligate life, from that destruction, to which she, as a *Canaanite*, was devoted, and procur'd her the protection and favour of our forefathers? Was it the bare belief, that God would give up her people into our hands? No! But because in consequence of that belief, she kindly entertain'd our messengers, hiding them from those who sought their lives; and by directing them a different way from that which the pursuers had taken, deliver'd them out of all danger. (*Josh.* ii.)

26. Which case is exactly parallel with that before us; for as *Rahab* was not saved by her faith alone, but on account of those works which her faith produced; so no man will be approved of God, on the account of his belief alone, however great and swelling notions he may have of it; but because it has had its proper effect on his life and actions: For as the natural body, without the spiritual substance to enliven and actuate it, is dead, and entirely useless; so a faith, which does not produce a suitable obedience, is dead and useless also.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.



C H A P. III.

We are not rashly to take upon ourselves the office of instructing and reproofing others, ver. 1. The unruliness of the tongue, the mischiefs it produces, and the necessity of governing it, ver. 2, 5. The truly wise are meek and peaceable, without envy and strife, 13.

1. **M**Y brethren, be not many matters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

2 For in many things we offend all, if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

1. **H**AVING so fully proved to you the necessity of obedience and a holy life, in order to the obtaining the favour of God ; let me exhort you, my brethren, rather to apply yourselves to the perfecting your habits, and regulating your actions by his most holy laws, than to assume the character of instructors, or be ambitious of rule and dominion. For it is not a light matter to sit in judgment on, or to be teachers of others : stations which will expose you to mighty temptations, and which call for great prudence and experience to manage ; and in which, if you are defective, they will very much heighten your condemnation.

2. Therefore no wise man would be forward to thrust himself into them, especially if he considers that even the best and most considerate men fail in too many instances, and offend thro' rashness and inadvertency, which calls for great humility in ourselves, and forbearance with others. And indeed, that man who can restrain himself from all rash and indiscreet expressions and from unjust and partial decisions, may justly be stiled a perfect man, as understanding

standing his duty and practising it; in that he has gain'd the most difficult conquest over himself: for it is by our speech that we discover those violent passions which first rise in the mind, which passions we must first restrain, before we shall be able to govern our words.

3. For as by putting a bridle into a horse's mouth, we command him at pleasure, and make him obedient to our will:

4. And as by a very small rudder we direct the course of the greatest ships, which by the skillful management of that little instrument are supported against the violence of the fiercest winds:

5. Even so the tongue, when under a wise regulation, tho a very small member, is really capable of very great things, and fully comes up to the foregoing comparisons: which is not to be wonder'd at, for you see the same in every thing about you, particularly in a spark of fire, which, if it has but proper matter to work on, is presently increas'd to a prodigious flame.

6. To which fire, the tongue of man, when not duly regulated, may be most aptly compar'd; for when it is set in motion by our lusts and passions there is no manner of iniquity which it will not perform. And thereby it makes the man to appear in the most black and odious form, by blowing up those fatal sparks of strife and discord which are destructive to the whole human race, and which

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father: and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

take their rise from those infernal spirits, who for their ambition and malice are sentenc'd to everlasting fire.

7. Nor indeed do I know any one comparison that more strongly illustrates the ungovernableness of this member than fire does; which when once it has got the mastery carries all before it. For as to the various orders of beings which are in the world, they are all capable of being tamed and brought under some kind of government; and we daily see that not only beasts, and birds, and serpents themselves, tho' very noxious creatures, but even beings so far remov'd from us as to require a different element for the support of their life, as the fishes in the sea, have obey'd the voice of, and been made familiar by men, who have turned their thoughts that way.

8. But the tongue of a man of strong and ungovernable passions is not to be restrain'd by any art or skill, we are capable of using: but is indeed a mischief which cannot be conquer'd, and is as terrible in its effects as the most deadly poison, wounding and destroying the reputation of all who are so unhappy as to be expos'd to its rage.

9. The truth of this is sadly confirmed to us by the outrageous procedure of the *Jewish* bigots, who while they are with the greatest devotion worshiping the only true God, and blessing him as their author and preserver, (and who is indeed the author and preserver of the whole human race) yet at the same time they dare to curse and anathematize their inoffensive neighbours, who as well

well as themselves are made in the image and likeness of God; and who are therefore the proper objects of their love and esteem.

10. What strange procedure is this? that blessings and cursings, the two most opposite things in the world, can come from the same person? My brethren, how can you act after such a manner?

11. Do you see any thing like it in the whole creation? Where can you find a spring, which at the same place sends forth water which is sweet and good for use, and water that is bitter and hurtful?

12. Nay in those things which are good and profitable, we see that they all keep in their own proper way. You don't find that the fig-tree produces the fruit of the olive, nor does the vine bring forth figs. Nor does the same fountain yield salt and fresh water: how then can a man, impress'd with a sense of God's favour, bless and adore his mercy and goodness, which always supposes a humble and grateful mind; and at the same time curse and imprecate evil on his brother; which always proceeds from a furious and implacable temper?

13. Seeing therefore it is so difficult to act in a publick station as we ought to do, and so dangerous to ourselves if we fail in the discharge of it; and since true greatness and honour do not consist in worldly power and grandeur, but in the government of the tongue, and the performing such actions as are commendable and praise worthy; let that man who values himself upon his great attain-

10 Out of the same mouth. proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12 Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries; either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge amongst you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

ments, and is ambitious of an exalted character, for wisdom and prudence: Let him, I say, not seek it in places of temporal dignity, but by conversing with all men in a meek and friendly manner, and by shewing forth a noble and worthy mind endowed with true wisdom, by conducting all his actions suitably to such a conversation, in the steady practice of universal kindness and benevolence.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

14. For how highly soever you may think of yourselves, or whatever boast you may make of your wisdom, if you indulge an envious and malicious temper of mind; and in order to aggrandize yourselves, become promoters of strife and discord; your behaviour will be so far from being a subject of praise and glory to you, that you will stand chargeable with the greatest folly, and your actions will loudly proclaim the falsity of your pretences to wisdom.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.

15. For this wisdom, falsely so called, does not proceed from God, who is the alone giver of all true wisdom, which consists of peace and love; but it proceeds from a mind swallowed up in its attachments to this present world, fill'd with pride and ambition, and carried away by every irregular passion and appetite; whereby the man becomes a slave to the evil one, and a promoter of every thing that is bad.

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion, and every evil work.

16. For when a man indulges an envious and contentious disposition, nothing can flow from it, but what is faulty and criminal, and must end in universal disorder and ruin.

17 But the wisdom that is from

17. But that heavenly wisdom which descends from the Father of lights,

lights, possesses the man with a purity which is incompatible with all ambitious thoughts and disorderly passions, and fills him with an unspeakable desire to promote the universal peace and happiness of mankind. It makes him calm under provocation; and withdrawing from all contention, he is always ready to return good for any evil treatment he may meet with; being always easy to be persuaded to the performance of any kind and friendly action, and pleased with forgiving any injuries he has received; ever doing all the good in his power, and always acting according to the laws of universal justice and equity; the whole flowing from a sincere and upright temper of mind.

18. The blessed effects of which righteous and peaceable behaviour shall, as good seed sown in rich ground, which brings forth abundantly of its own kind, produce to the blessed possessor in a better state, an abundant increase of peace and happiness, which he shall never be deprived of.

above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

C H A P. IV.

Wars and fightings proceed from the lusts of men, from ambition, and worldly-mindedness, ver. 1. An exhortation to repentance, 7. Against evil-speaking and rash judgment, 11. In all our affairs, we should remember the uncertainty of life, and regard the providence of God, 13.

1 IF therefore you really possess this pure and peaceable wisdom, from whence then, O you

FROM whence come wars and fightings among you? obstinate

come they not hence,
even of your lusts,
that war in your
members?

2 Ye lust, and have
not: ye kill, and de-
fire to have, and
cannot obtain: ye
fight and war, yet ye
have not, because ye
ask not.

3 Ye ask, and re-
ceive not, because ye
ask amiss, that ye
may consume it upon
your lusts.

4 Ye adulterers,
and adulteresses,
know ye not that
the friendship of
the world, is enmity
with God? who so-
soever therefore will
be a friend of the
world, is the enemy
of God.

obstinate *Jews*, come these wars and
contentions which you are perpetual-
ly engaged in, not only with the
enemies of your nation, but with one
another? Come they not from your
giving up yourselves to loose and un-
restrain'd affections, and strong passi-
ons? Which not being kept in a due
subordination to the rational powers,
so disorder you, that you are uncapa-
ble of doing any wise or good action.

2. You have strong desires which
you are not able to gratify, and there-
fore are miserable. Ye are guilty of
all manner of injustice and violence,
to enable you to satisfy those desires,
which nevertheless you are not able
to do. Nay, even in those wars which
you undertake with some justice, you
don't succeed, and why? Because
you don't implore assistance from that
God, who is the disposer of nations
and kingdoms.

3. If it should be answer'd, you do
implore his aid and assistance, and
ask how it is that your prayers are
not answer'd? I reply, that the reason
why your prayers are not heard, even
when you are injured and oppress'd
by your enemies, is, because you ask
with depraved and vicious dispositi-
ons, being greedy of riches and pow-
er, only for the gratification of your
lusts and passions.

4. O ye adulterers and adulter-
esses, and all you who indulge your-
selves in criminal pleasures, can ye
be ignorant that the giving up your-
selves to ambitious views and sen-
sual desires, which put you upon
performing all manner of base and
unrighteous actions, entirely unfits
you for the service of God; and that
thereby

thereby you lift yourselves under an opposite power which is at enmity with him. That man therefore whose happiness consists in worldly pleasures and grandeur, is an enemy to God, as opposing that spiritual kingdom of peace and purity, which he is erecting in the world.

5. Can you be so infatuated as to think that there is no good reason why the holy prophets should with so much earnestness caution us against a contentious and ambitious disposition? Or can you be so deprived of all understanding, as to believe that that kind and good Spirit which dwells in all those who fear God and obey him, and is always exciting us to universal goodness and mercy, will approve of hatred and envy in another? * Or can himself be guilty of them?

6. No, so far is he from envying us any good thing, that he is always enlarging his favours to those who are of a meek and humble disposition, agreeable to the remark of the wise man, that the proud and obdurate, God will destroy, but will shew favour and mercy to the humble and teachable mind. (*Prov. iii. 34.*)

7. Let me therefore perswade you to humble yourselves before the Almighty for all your iniquities, and

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace; wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God; resist the de-

* This verse may be so read as to make two questions, thus *Do ye think that the Scripture speaketh in vain, viz. against this ambitious, worldly temper? doth the Spirit (of God) which dwelleth in us (Christians) lust to envy?* As the original will bear this reading; so it has these two advantages, that it agrees best with the following verse, and removes the difficulty of finding a passage in the Old Testament, which is no where to be found in it.

vil, and he will flee
from you :

8 Draw nigh to
God, and he will
draw nigh to you ;
cleanse *your* hands,
ye sinners, and puri-
fy *your* hearts, ye
double-minded.

9 Be afflicted, and
mourn, and weep :
let your laughter be
turned to mourning,
and *your* joy to hea-
venness.

he will have mercy upon you. And
oppose the evil one, who is the ori-
ginal of all the confusion which is in
the world ; and all that power which
you have given him over yourselves,
he shall be depriv'd of, and you shall
be rescued from his insupportable
tyranny.

8 Humble yourselves before God
while he yet affords you space for
repentance, and with truly contrite
and teachable spirits, implore par-
don for your past offences, and be-
seech him to direct you to the know-
ledge of the truth, and he will in
great mercy hear your humble pe-
titions, forgive your iniquities, and
guide you by his Spirit to an accepta-
ble service. To which end, quit all
those actions of violence and injustice
which you are so notoriously guilty
of, and of which your forefathers
set you so sad an example, in first
murdering the holy prophets, and at
length, to compleat your guilt, in
crucifying the Lord of life and glory ;
by which you stand in the first rank
of offenders. And all you who have
indulged yourselves in worldly plea-
sures, and so become divided in your
affections between your duty to God,
and your love of this world, divest
yourselves of all sensual delights which
you will in a very little time be de-
prived of, by those terrible judg-
ments which God is about to bring
on the *Jewish* nation.

9. Deeply afflict yourselves then
before God for your past offences,
and by your unfeigned sorrow and
tears testify your abhorrence of them.
Let all your vain mirth and infa-
mous rejoycings be changed into sin-
cere

cere humiliation and mourning, truly lamenting your wicked lives.

10. And for your encouragement to a thorow reformation, I assure you if you are truly sensible of your great iniquities and repent of them, God who knows the sincerity of your repentance will have mercy upon you, and not only deliver you from that grievous destruction which is just coming upon this miserable nation; but will also safely conduct you to his heavenly kingdom.

11. My brethren, don't be guilty of censuring and condemning one another for things in which the law is silent and does not condemn you. For whosoever shall judge and pass sentence on his brother for such actions as the law itself does not condemn, censures the law itself as imperfect and faulty for not condemning him; and thereby quiting his proper station which obliges him to a humble obedience to that law which he is under, he assumes the character of a judge of it, as having a right to alter or add to it.

12. But know, O vain man! there is but one supreme lawgiver, who will demand a strict account of your obedience to his laws, particularly of your behaviour to your fellow servants; who will abundantly reward those that obey him, and punish with utter destruction the proud and disobedient. How dare you then, O presumptuous man, to anathematize and censure your brother for those things which our great lawgiver has not censured? And what a severe condemnation will you bring upon yourself for so doing?

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth *his* brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

13. There

13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain :

14 Whereas ye know not what *shall* be on the morrow : For what *is* your life ? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boast.

13. There is also another temper of mind, which I must ardently recommend to you ; I mean a just sense of the great uncertainty of human affairs, and an entire resignation of yourselves to the divine will ; which you are so far from considering, that you express yourselves in your very common conversation, as tho you had the sole disposal of your future life. What else do you mean, when without the least acknowledgment of your dependence on the good providence of God, you presumptuously say, that at such a season, we will perform such a journey, and for a long space continue in such a great and populous city, where by means of trade and merchandize we will acquire great riches.

14. O foolish and inconsiderate men, how can you thus boast yourselves of futurity, when you do not so much as know whether you shall be continued in this state till to morrow ? for what is your present life on which all your future actions depend ? does it not very aptly resemble a thick vapour which hovers in the air for a small space, whose parts are separated by the least current of wind, and disappearing is lost for ever ?

15. Surely such dependent and momentary creatures should undertake nothing but as assisted and supported by that divine providence on which we constantly depend ; which if we are duly sensible of, we can't help acknowledging it on all proper occasions.

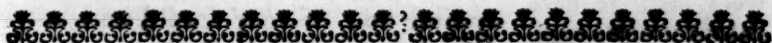
16. But you, on the contrary, instead of owning your dependance on God, for the continuance of your life,

life, and the success of your undertakings, proudly boast of your own great abilities, and power; and that you will conduct your affairs by the strength of your own superior wisdom: which procedure if you at all reflect on, it must appear even unto yourselves highly faulty and criminal.

17. If therefore after this admonition you continue to practise contrary to your better knowledge, you will thereby aggravate your guilt and heighten your condemnation.

ings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin.



CHAP. V.

Wicked rich men are threatened with God's judgments, for their injustice, oppression, luxury, and persecuting the pious, ver. 1. Christians are exhorted to patience under their sufferings, 7. Against rash swearing, 12. A comfortable direction to the sick, and the prevalence of prayer, 14. Of reducing a straying brother, 19.

1. **B**UT know, O ye great and mighty men of the *Jewish* nation, who have oppress'd and tyranniz'd over your brethren, and enriched yourselves by injustice and violence; know, I say, that your hour of prosperity is over, and nothing more remains for you but the deepest distress and anguish; for the day of righteous vengeance is at hand, when you shall be deprived of all those unrighteous and base gratifications, in which you have plac'd your whole felicity.

GO to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2. For

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered: and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold the hire of the labourers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned and killed

2. For from henceforth your riches obtained by oppression shall be of no more service to you; and that distinction of apparel, on which you have valued yourselves and despis'd your poor brother, shall be as useless to you as garments which thro' long neglect have been devour'd by the moth.

3. Your very gold and silver in which you have gloried will be as unprofitable to you as tho they were consum'd by rust, and moulder'd away, so as never more to be of any service; but shall remain a witness against you of your sordid and cruel dispositions, which shall greatly aggravate your punishment both here and hereafter; when you will sadly find the miserys they will expose you to, will be inexpressibly greater than all those temporary satisfactions you ever receiv'd from them.

4. O you rich and powerful men, what injustice have you not been guilty off? the very labourers of the field you have defrauded of their wages, and the cry of those who have gather'd in your corn is ascended to heaven, and the God of hosts, the supreme ruler of the universe, will plead their cause and call you to a strict account for all your oppressions.

5. You have indulged yourselves in sensual pleasures, and been guilty of all manner of excess and lewdness: And by giving up yourselves to ease and luxury have prepar'd yourselves for the terrors of that day, which shall fall upon you with the utmost force:

6. Who not content with crucifying the Lord of life and glory, have unjustly

unjustly put to death his faithful followers, who were so far from provoking you to those acts of cruelty by being guilty of tumults and insurrections against the government, that they patiently submitted to all the injuries you were capable of practicing, and in the extremity of their sufferings, even prayed for their persecutors and murderers.

7. But for you, my beloved brethren, who are faithful followers of the meek and holy *Jesus*, patiently wait the coming of your Lord, who will fully reward you for your submissive behaviour; and take a most exemplary vengeance on your cruel and unjust enemies. And don't think the requiring such a behaviour an unreasonable injunction; for it is no more than what is practised by every common husbandman; who after he has prepar'd his ground and sowed his seed, with a great deal of patience waits for there turn of the several seasons, whereby the fruit is carried on from one state to another, till being come to its full perfection, (which it would never have arrived at without those alterations of weather) the owner is fully rewarded by a plentiful harvest.

8. Agreeable to which example, calm and compose your minds under all your present difficulties, in the steady belief of the speedy coming of your Lord, who will judge with impartial equity between you and your inveterate enemies; and for your encouragement, I assure you that that important day is just at hand.

9. But, my brethren, tho I make use of the consideration of that day

the just; and he doth not resist you.

7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 Grudge not one against another, brethren

thren, lest ye be condemned : behold, the judge standeth before the door.

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

of righteous recompence, to excite in you a patient submission under all your sufferings; yet let me exhort you carefully to guard against the least desire of revenge on your persecutors, lest you also should be found guilty of the same fault for which they will be condemn'd, and consequently suffer with them; therefore be very diligent to divest yourselves of all impatience and anger, and possess your minds with forgiving and meek dispositions; for, as I have before told you, the judge is already on his way to take cognizance of your affair.

10. And that you may acquire a perfectly patient and forgiving disposition, carefully attend to the examples, which have been set us by the holy prophets of our nation, who when they met with the most injurious treatment for their kind endeavours to reform your manners, and instruct your minds in the will of God, yet did not repine at the sufferings they indured, but submitted patiently to the most cruel torments, and even death itself, that they might obtain a better inheritance.

11. And we are well assured, that the highest blessings are prepar'd for all those, who patiently submit to the worst of temporal sufferings for the sake of religion and virtue.

It becomes you also to remember the submissive behaviour of righteous *Job*, in whom you have a worthy example of great patience and resignation to the will of God under the severest trials and afflictions, from all which the Lord graciously deliver'd him and raised him to a much superior

rior state of power and dignity than he had ever possess'd before; wherein you have a sensible instance of God's great goodness to those who fear him; and that however for the trial of your virtues, and the perfecting your habits of submission and patience, he may suffer you to be afflicted, yet in the end he will deliver you, and abundantly reward you for all your sufferings.

12. But above all other instances of impatience, let me beseech you carefully to avoid all rash and prophane swearing, and that not only by the most awful name of the supreme majesty, which is not to be mentioned on every light and trivial occasion, but even by the heavens which are the throne of God from whence he displays his glory to his creatures; or by the earth which was created by him; or by any other being or thing, since all things were made by him and depend upon him; and therefore the calling them to witness to the truth of any assertion is no less than calling God himself to be witness of it, which ought never to be practised in common discourse. Therefore let your conversation consist of the most simple expressions barely denying or affirming the truth of any thing; and let all your actions be agreeable to your words; that so the whole of your lives may be conducted with truth and sincerity: which that man will most certainly forfeit who is guilty of rash and passionate expressions, and by losing his innocence become liable to be condemn'd with the world.

12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

13. And that your minds may be always under a just regulation, and fit for the performance of every duty, instead of discomposing yourselves by repining at any present affliction, implore strength and wisdom of God, that you may behave as you ought to do under the trial; and, as I have already assured you, God will support you under it and reward you for your patient submission: and if any man finds himself in a pleasant and chearful frame, let him employ himself in hymns of acknowledgment to God, who has favour'd him with such an agreeable disposition; by which wise management you will turn every state and circumstance of life to your very great profit and advantage.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oyl in the name of the Lord:

14. And for your comfort under your present trials, I have orders to inform you, that if any sincere Christian is afflicted with sickness, he should in that case send for the elders of the Church, and they shall pray to God for his recovery; at the same time anointing him with oyl as our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded; thereby owning his divine mission and authority.

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

15. And this prayer put up to God in the firm belief that he will hear it, shall deliver the sick person from his disease, and the Lord will restore him to his former health. And if his illness was sent as a chastisement for his offences, he not only shall be cured of his indisposition, but his faults shall also be forgiven him by God.

16 Confess your faults one to another,

16. Therefore be always ready to confess your faults to one another, that

that unitedly imploring relief and pardon of God, you may be delivered from your infirmities, and restored to his favour; for the inspir'd * prayer of the just and holy man is very prevalent in the sight of God.

17. Which that it is, you have a very remarkable instance in *Elijah*; who tho' a man of like infirmities with ourselves, and whose natural powers were but the powers of a man; yet when he prayed, that God would make the children of *Israel* sensible, how highly they had offended him by their idolatry, by depriving them of the rain from heaven, for the space of three years, and upwards; God heard his prayer, and deprived them thereof according to his request, for that space, whereby they were reduc'd to the utmost distress.

18. And again, when at the expiration of that time, he prayed that God would mercifully restore to them the rain of heaven, for the produce of the fruits of the earth; that they might be convinc'd that the former judgment was brought upon them for their iniquities: God again heard his prayer, and sent plenty of rain; and the earth brought forth in great abundance. Which instance of God's hearing the fervent prayer of this upright man, is a good reason why you should believe he will hear you according to his promise, if you sincerely believe in, and obey him.

and pray one for another, that ye may be healed: The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17 *Elias* was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

* As this is the most probable sense of the original word, so it agrees best with the instance given of *Elias*, whose prayer was an inspired prayer.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him ;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

19. And finally for your encouragement to watch over one another for your mutual good, be assur'd that if any of you be seduced from his religion and virtue, and another by his kind and prudent management shall recal him by repentance to holiness and obedience ;

20. He who proves the happy instrument of turning an offender from a faulty and criminal conduct, will be consider'd by God as having delivered a rational mind from ruin and destruction, in preventing the dismal effects of his transgressions, and thereby become intitled to that great reward which is promised to him who shall turn a sinner from the ways of vice and folly to a sincere love of truth and a holy obedience.



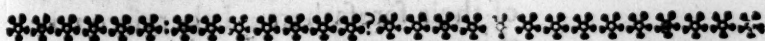


A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

First Epistle of St. Peter.



C H A P. I.

The salutation, ver. 1. The apostle praiseth God for the blessings of the gospel, 3. The happy end of afflictions for the sake of it, 6. The gospel salvation foretold by the prophets under the old testament, 10. We are to hope for this salvation in the way of our duty, 13. We are redeem'd by the blood of Christ, the lamb of God fore-ordain'd before the foundation of the World, 18. The end of his resurrection and glorification, 21. Christians are to love one another, since by regeneration they are enter'd into a new and spiritual relation, which is permanent and eternal, as the word of God is by which they are regenerated,

22.

1. **I** PETER, an eye witness to the life and actions, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, commission'd and sent by him to instruct mankind in the christian religion: that I may perform this commission in the fullest manner, I cannot content myself with declaring by word of mouth,

PETER an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

this

this most gracious dispensation to the world; but would also by writing confirm and strengthen all those, who have been convinced of the truth of Christianity, and have with honest minds yielded obedience to it.

And whereas my Lord and master Jesus Christ, in a particular manner has committed to me the apostleship of the circumcision, and more immediately sent me to the lost house of *Israel*; who by the righteous judgment of God are scatter'd throughout the world, as he threaten'd by his prophets, for the sins and idolatries of their forefathers; I therefore take this opportunity of writing to you my brethren who have imbraced the christian religion, and are now dispers'd thro' *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia* and the *Proconsular Asia*, as not being able to assist you with my presence, being at no less distance from you than *Babylon*;

2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied.

2. To you therefore, with the warmest affections, I send this letter; who have renounced this present evil world, that you might obtain a better inheritance; whom the one God, the supreme Creator of all, and Father of them that fear him, made choice of from his unerring foreknowledge of your honest and good dispositions; purifying your hearts by his Holy Spirit, and setting you apart to universal holiness, and obedience; that you might be fitted to partake of that exceeding great grace and mercy, which he bestows on the offending race of mankind, thro' the death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ:

Christ: which unspeakable favour and blessing, and that true joy and peace, which necessarily arise from it, I pray God you may be every day more and more fitted for, by your diligent attention to all his commands.

3. In the view of this exceeding great felicity, with the utmost fervency, I bless and adore the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who has by his wonderful forbearance, and kind revelations, manifested his pity and compassion to a sinful world ever since the fall. But has now much more abundantly discover'd his mercy and goodness, by the assurance he has given us that we are restored to his favour, thro' the sacrifice made for us by the blood of Christ: since Jesus Christ who brought from heaven the doctrine of reconciliation has been by God himself raised from the dead in attestation of it.

4. The consequence of which reconciliation is no less, than the being entitled to an inheritance incapable of all the changes and alterations which things are liable to in this imperfect state; into which none shall be admitted but such who have acquired the habits of goodness and purity; and which will endure for ever, very unlike to that corruptible, defiled, and faded inheritance from which you *Israelites* are fallen.

5. It being indeed an inheritance which God himself has provided in heaven, for all those who attend to the revelation he has made to mankind, and comply with the kind

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be

aids

revealed in the last time.

aids and assistances given by the Spirit of God, and yield a sincere obedience to his laws; these shall be snatch'd from the destruction which is coming upon the world, and shall be made partakers of that glory and happiness which shall be made manifest at the day of judgment.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, tho now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

6. In the sure expectation of this inheritance, your minds are fill'd with unspeakable joy, notwithstanding God permits you for wise reasons to go thro' very great trials and afflictions.

7 That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perissheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

7. Neither indeed ought these afflictions in the least to discourage you, because as gold, a thing which is only for this present state, and is to have an end, yet by being melted in the fire, is so far from losing its goodness, that it truly becomes more valuable; so these afflictions which God suffers you to be tried with here will be so far from being to your detriment, that they will be a means of refining and purifying you, and bringing you to a greater conformity to his will: whereby when you shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, you will be fitted to receive from him such high approbation and applause, as becomes your great fidelity in steddily adhering to the truth under so great trials; and shall be raised to that exceeding great glory, which God has prepared for all those who love and obey the Lord Jesus Christ, and follow him through the greatest sufferings and persecutions.

8. Which

8. Which you doin so eminent a manner, that tho' you never were so happy as to have conversed with him while he was upon earth, and tho he does not now present himself to your bodily eyes, yet believing those great truths which we who were present with him during his ministry upon earth testify of him, you chearfully submit to all manner of injuries for his sake, from the highest sense of love and gratitude, whilst your minds from your firm beleif of that glory which is to be reveal'd are fill'd, with inexpressible joy as a foretaste of your future dignity and happiness.

9. By which in some measure you possess, even here, the great end of your faithfulness and obedience to Christ, which is no less than the deliverance of your souls from the destruction of the world, and the obtaining eternal life and felicity.

10. Which great deliverance by Jesus Christ was constantly spoke of by all the prophets of our nation, whose minds were always filled with the most earnest desire of further light and knowledge of that mercy and favour which God would shew to mankind by the Messiah ;

11. Always labouring with the utmost diligence to discover, what was the meaning of those prophecies, which the holy Spirit gave to mankind by them, which intimated both the time when the Messiah should come, and spoke of those great sufferings which he was to undergo for our sakes, and also pointed out that extensive dominion and authority which, as a reward for his sufferings, he should be invested with.

8 Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory :

9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you :

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12. Which

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

13 Wherefore gird up the loyns of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

12. Which things were discover'd to them, not so much for their own sakes, as for ours; that they might be assisting to us, in explaining the doctrines of Jesus Christ; that when you compare these prophecies, with the account which we have given you of him, and which has been demonstrated to be true and faithful, by the miraculous operations of the holy Spirit, you might be fully convinced of the truth of the christian religion: which things are of so great importance, that the very angels of God, those beings so highly exalted above us, think them most worthy of their examination, and with great delight and pleasure look into the wonderful and wise contrivance of God, in redeeming the world by Jesus Christ.

13. Seeing therefore God has been so gracious, as to make known to you his exceeding great love thro' Jesus Christ; let it raise you to the exerting of all your powers and faculties, in his service; behave yourselves with all sobriety, nor suffer any circumstances of this present life to discompose you; but keep your minds fix'd upon these great truths, that you may be constantly filled with the assured hope of that eternal inheritance, which he has promised you in Christ Jesus, when by him he shall reward every man according to his works.

14. Which that you may obtain, it is absolutely necessary, that as God has taken you into the relation of children, you should reverence him as your Father by sincerely obeying his laws, and forsaking

all those foolish and vicious practices, which you were guilty of, while you gave yourselves up to the worship of dumb idols.

15. But having now renounced them, and given yourselves up to the service of the only true God, whose actions are all conducted by the eternal laws of holiness, righteousness, and truth; you are also obliged to conduct your lives in the same manner.

16. And indeed holiness has ever been an indispensable obligation, on all who belong to God, or pretend to any interest in him; agreeable to what is written in the law of *Moses*, Be ye holy for I am holy. (*Lev. xi. 44. xix. 2.*)

17. And since we as christians worship the same universal Father as did our ancestors under the Mosaic dispensation, that supreme being who will with impartial justice reward every man according to his works; let us spend the short time of our continuance in this world in a cautious fear of offending him, or doing any thing that is contrary to his most holy will.

18. Which you who are of the ten tribes ought in a most particular manner to be careful of, since God has again restored you to his favour, and recover'd you from your idolatry and vain worship, attended with many foolish and criminal rites, which you perform'd for no other reason, but because your fathers did it before you; without any rational hope of its being approved by God: from which state of folly and idolatry you are now

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation:

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every mans work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers:

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot:

20. Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you;

21 Who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love

redeem'd, not by the offering of such perishable things as silver and gold, which have no tendency to purify the mind;

19 and 20. But by the truly valuable blood of Christ, who even before the existence of this present world, was appointed by the God and Father of all, for the redemption of the fallen race of mankind; which in this present age hath been accomplish'd by our Lord Jesus Christ inhabiting a human body, and after having set us an example of holiness and obedience, to the laws of God, being himself perfectly pure and free from all sin, giving up his life on the cross for us; he being indeed that spotless and holy sacrifice, which was obscurely pointed out to us, by that lamb free from all natural defects, which we *Jews* once a year offer'd to God, on the great day of *expiation*;

21. This most excellent person did, I say, in this present age lay down his life for you, who believe that God sent him to reconcile the world by faith and obedience to himself; which that he hath done, God himself hath demonstrated by raising him from the dead, and receiving him up into inexpressible glory: that your belief, that God has provided an eternal inheritance for you, and your hope of enjoying it might be without any uncertainty or wavering.

22. And since the belief of these great truths has had such a good effect upon your minds thro' the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, and has made you so diligent in obeying the

the laws of God, that you have brought yourselves as his children to a sincere love of all who by the same faith are become your common brethren; take care that ye continue to love one another with that sincere affection and that high degree of it, which becomes such a relation :

23. Remembering that your brethren as well as yourselves are by the renewing of the mind become the children of the ever-living God ; that both they and you owe that birth from which your spiritual relation of christian brethren is derived, not to any corruptible principle, like that from whence those temporal relations arise which shall perish with the body ; but to the incorruptible principle of the divine word. And as that divine word itself shall live and abide for ever ; so will it give to those who are born of it, an entrance into an incorruptible state : and consequently your relation to those who like yourselves have the seeds of eternal life sown in them, will never cease, as those relations must, which arise from our animal natures.

24. For all the relations of this world are like ourselves, of short continuance : and all the glory we boast of may very fitly be compared to the grass of the field ; which though beautifully green in the morning, yet by the heat of the sun is made to wither before night, and loses all its verdure.

25. But the just and righteous laws of God are of eternal duration : and these eternal and unchangeable

of the brethren ; *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently :*

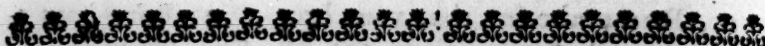
23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away :

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this laws,

is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

laws, together with the motives which enforce them, are the substance of that gospel, which is preached to you as the proper means of preparing and disposing your minds for that eternal life of happiness, which it graciously offers to you.



C H A P. II.

Christians are to avoid all Uncharitableness, and to make use of the word of God for their increase in holiness and all christian virtues, ver. 1. Christ the foundation and chief corner stone; the happiness and privilege of those who receive him, and are built upon him; and the misery of those who reject him, 4. The ten tribes rejected for their idolatry from being the people of God; but those of them who believe in Christ, now restor'd to that privilege, and all the blessings which accompany it, 9. They must maintain a holy and blameless conversation, 11. They are to be obedient to magistrates, 13. Servants must obey their masters, and suffer patiently in well doing, after the example of Christ, 18. The design of Christ's death, 24.

W Herefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speaking,

2. As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby :

SEEING therefore you have past thro' such an important change, take great care for the future you act suitably to it, and particularly guard against every malicious and wicked disposition, against all fraud and injustice, against envy and discontent, and against all reviling and evil-speaking.

2. And since you are taken out of this evil world, and translated into a state opposite to it, consisting of righteousness, love, and peace; act as such who are just enter'd into a new state

state of existence; and carefully inform yourselves of the rules and precepts of the society into which you are admitted; that constantly increasing in knowledge, and daily perfecting your obedience, you may become wise and useful members of it; and be more and more fitted for the service of your Lord and master:

3. Which indeed you can't help doing, if you have a true sense of those great and valuable blessings, which Christ has purchas'd for you;

4. Whom you depend on as your Saviour, to whom joyning yourselves as unto the chief part and support of a living building, despised indeed by the powers of this world, but most highly esteem'd by God;

5. Ye also having receiv'd life from him, are together with him built up a spiritual temple, a priesthood distinguished by internal and real holiness, fitted to offer up sacrifices of a spiritual nature, which consist of praise and thanksgiving, and flow from minds deeply impress'd with a sense of God's great mercy and goodness:

6. Which sacrifices he will accept thro' Jesus Christ; as it is very beautifully represented by the prophet *Isaiab.* Behold (says he) I lay in *Zion*, a chief corner stone, chosen, and beloved, (*Isai.* xxviii. 16.) By whom both *Jew* and *Gentile* shall become one building; he being chose by God for that purpose, as every way qualified for the trust committed to him; so that all those who with honest and sincere minds receive his doctrines, and obey his

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

5 Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in *Sion* a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe, *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.

And the Lord

to whom cometh

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.

And therefore also

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

And

laws, shall escape the condemnation of the world, and shall stand approved in the day of judgment.

7. Therefore as for you, who believe his doctrines, and submit to his authority, assure yourselves, that he will raise you to the highest honour, and dignity; and that in the most open and publick manner. But let them know, who reject him, that that person, whom the powers of this world both *Jew* and *Gentile* refused to obey, and united together to destroy, him God has declared, by raising him from the dead, to be the deliverer who was to come, and the person thro' whom alone he will show favour to mankind. (*Psal.* cxviii, 22.)

8. And therefore since they have refused him, whom God hath appointed Lord of all, of which God hath given undeniable evidence; he will give them up to their own wicked dispositions, whereby they will go on, more and more, to oppose his gracious dispensation of love and mercy, (*Isai.* viii. 14.) till having compleated their measure of iniquity, God will bring upon them that terrible destruction, which they have been so often forewarn'd of.

9. But you who, with teachable dispositions, have believed the Christian revelation, are now become the pure and spotless Church of God, being purify'd from all blemish by the blood of Christ: and all those endearing names, and exalted titles, which God formerly bestowed upon the *Jewish* Church, belong to you; who tho long separated from it, by your vain conversation,

and

and idolatries, are now in the most eminent degree, by your faith in Christ, become a chosen generation, an assembly of kings and priests to God, a society set apart to holiness; a purchased people by the blood of Christ: that you should by holy and unblameable lives, evidence the sense you have of the exceeding love and goodness of God, who has taken you out of that dark state of heathenism in which you were involved, and restor'd you to his favour by the gospel of his only begotten Son, whereby you are fitted for eternal glory and happiness.

10. In whose recovery begins to be fulfill'd what was so many ages ago foretold by the prophet *Hosea*; in that he declares that the *Israelitish* nation, who should for several ages lose the character of being the people of God, should become the people of God; and that those whom God in his righteous judgment would for their idolatries give up a prey to the idolatrous nations, should obtain mercy, and be rescued from that state of wickedness and idolatry, in which they had been so long sunk and almost lost. (*Hos. ii. 23. **)

11. Now my dearly beloved, let me intreat you, as those who are convinced of the excellency of the

10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pil-

* This prophecy, as also that in *Hos. i. 10.* plainly relates to the *Israelitish* nation: and whereas *St. Paul* in *Rom. ix. 24, 25, 26.* seems to apply it to the *Gentiles*, the meaning is only this, that as *Hosea* prophesied, that those of the ten tribes who should believe in Christ, should become the people of God, which privilege they had lost by their idolatry; so, in like manner, the *Gentiles*, who before were not the people of God, were become his people by the same faith in Christ.

grims, abstain from
fleshly lusts, which
war against the soul;

christian institution, the reasonable-
ness of its laws, and the unspeakable
greatness of its rewards; in the
hopes of which you have by Bap-
tism renounced the pomps and plea-
sures of this evil world, and given
up yourselves to the direction of an
opposite power; let me prevail up-
on you, I say, steddily to act accord-
ingly, and not suffer yourselves for
the future, to be brought under the
power of the sensitive pleasures of
this world, which have a direct ten-
dency to debase your minds and
draw you off from your attention to
spiritual things, and consequently
from your obedience to the laws of
God.

12 Having your
conversation honest
among the Gentiles:
that whereas they
speak against you
as evil-doers, they
may by *your* good
works which they
shall behold, glorify
God in the day of
visitation.

12. But converse with the idola-
trous *Gentiles* with whom you live,
in a sober and chaste manner; al-
ways ready to do them all the good
in your power; whereby you will
have a very great influence on those
very persons who now speak evil of
you, and take every occasion of in-
juring you, when they shall observe
your patience and humility, your
meekness and goodness, your readi-
ness to return acts of kindness for re-
proach and sufferings, and your pa-
tient submitting even to the most pain-
ful and cruel death for the sake of
Christ, in the assur'd hopes of an hap-
py immortality; and themselves also
further awaken'd unto consideration by
that exemplary and publick judg-
ment which God is about to pour
out on the *Jewish* nation, for their
crucifying the Lord of life and glory;
awakened, I say, by these considera-
tions, they will own the righteous
hand of God, and glorify him by
acknow-

acknowledging Jesus Christ for the true *Messiah* and Saviour of the world.

13. And whereas the *Jewish* nation has pretended to an exemption from all government and authority, except that of their own nation, I think it proper carefully to guard you against any such pernicious doctrine, and take this opportunity earnestly to exhort you to a chearful submission to the laws of the several governments, under which the providence of God has placed you; which submission is both well pleasing to God, and required by him: and that, whether those laws are immediately issued out by the supreme authority,

14. Or are such as are given by inferior magistrates who receive their authority from the supreme power; they both uniting in one and the same design, *viz.* the good of the society both in punishing such as by unjust and wicked actions disturb its peace, and by rewarding those who by commendable actions promote its welfare.

15. And this obedience God requires of you, that your ready compliance with the just and reasonable laws of the country in which you live, may put to silence the heathens, and make them ashamed of the falsities they charge you with, who would make you guilty of all that stubbornness and disobedience to your governours, with which the *Jewish* nation is so justly tax'd.

16. Nay further, tho Christ has indeed freed you from the burthen-some ceremonies of the *Jewish* law,

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of mannerly yet

liousness, but as the
servants of God.

yet don't use even this real freedom
in an insulting and ostentatious man-
ner to provoke your *Jewish* bre-
thren, who have not your know-
ledge; the doing of which can only
proceed from a wicked disposition,
which is directly opposite to Christi-
anity; but do all things as the faith-
ful servants of the God of love and
peace:

17 Honour all men.
Love the brother-
hood. Fear God. Ho-
nour the king.

17. Which that you may perform
in the most perfect manner, observe
these following rules. Be kind and
respectful to all men, even unto
your enemies. Raise in your
breasts the highest degree of love,
even to the laying down of your
lives for those who are your bre-
thren in the faith. Bear at all times
in your minds the highest reverence
to God the supreme governour of
the world; always afraid of offending
him. And lastly, cheerfully obey the
laws of your governour, who receives
his power from God for the good
and welfare of those who are under
him.

18 Servants, be
subject to your mas-
ters with all fear, not
only to the good and
gentle, but also to the
froward.

18. I shall now proceed to give
you some directions in the more pri-
vate and interiour parts of life, in
which let every one act suitable to
the station in which God has placed
him. In particular, let those who are
in a state of slavery submit to their
condition of life, yielding a ready
obedience to their master's com-
mands, as being well-pleasing to God,
whom they are required to reve-
rence, as having a proper authority
over them: and this ready obedi-
ence, God, who for wise reasons has
placed them in this low state of life,
requires of them, not only to the
master

master who is kind and humane, but to him also who is of a morose and cruel disposition.

19. And to encourage you to a chearful discharge of your duty, even under great difficulties, know, that God observes all your actions, and that if you submit patiently to the severe and injurious treatment of a cruel and wicked master, God who observes your patient submission in obedience to his commands, will reward you.

20. But if you are really guilty of faults, your submitting to punishment is no more than your duty, nor are you to hope for any reward for so doing. But if you are punish'd for good and commendable actions and take it patiently, this procedure God will approve and reward.

21. And tho the above direction is immediately design'd for such, who are in a state of subjection and slavery; yet let every one who professes himself a christian know, that our very religion calls us to a state of self-denial and suffering: for Jesus Christ himself our Lord and master, gave up his life on the cross for us, being put to death for his great love to mankind; and has therein set us a complete pattern of patient suffering for well doing; and as he died for us, so he expects we should also chearfully undergo all manner of injuries, and death itself, in the cause of religion and virtue.

22. And can we think much of following such a pattern? who was perfectly free from all impurity and defilement, and who never did an

19 For this *is* thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory *is it*, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently; this *is* acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

unkind

23 Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

unkind action; much less injured or deceived any one;

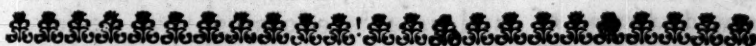
23. Who when the most severe and unjust reproaches were cast upon him, made no return, but meekly and silently endured them; and when he passed thro' cruel scourgings and buffetings, and at last was put to the most vile and ignominious death, yet he did not so much as threaten his persecutors, tho he had the power of heaven on his side; but patiently submitted his cause to the righteous and just governour of the world to determine for him:

24. Which cruel death of the cross he went thro' not for his own but for our sakes, to make expiation to God by his blood for our transgressions; that so having procured us the pardon of our past offences, we should utterly renounce all manner of sin and iniquity, as being dead to the allurements of this present evil world; and as such who have had a real change pass'd upon us, employ our whole lives, in the steady practice of universal holiness, patience, and resignation to the will of God; chearfully following the example our Lord has set us; since by those very sufferings, our iniquities are erased, and ourselves restored to the favour of God, and rescued from death and destruction.

25. And this in a particular manner should affect you, who are of the lost house of *Israel*, fitly compared to sheep gone astray; who having deserted the true sheepfold, the church, and the worship of the only true God, yourselves dispersed among the Gentiles, and with them

sunk

sunk into vice and idolatry, now thro' the exceeding great mercy and favour of God, are anew brought into his sheepfold, and again restored to his church; being reduced under the good Shepherd Jesus Christ, who is indeed the true *Messiah*, promised unto your forefathers, and the great instructor sent by God to recover the fallen race of mankind, from all manner of sin and pollution, and to prepare them by holiness and purity for, and conduct them to, eternal glory and happiness.



C H A P. III.

The duties of wives, ver. 1. Of husbands, v. 7. Of all christians towards one another and towards all men, 8. Motives and encouragements thereto, 10. The duty and happiness of those who suffer for righteousness sake, 14. The example of Christ propos'd for their encouragement; whose sufferings, death, resurrection, and exaltation, with the benefits of them, are declar'd, 18.

I. I NOW proceed to give some directions for the behaviour of those who are enter'd into the marriage state; and first with respect to the woman: know then it is the will of God, that the wife should be in subjection to her husband; and that the same inferiority which God appointed on the defection of our first parents, should be still continued; whether the husband has embraced the christian religion or

LIKEWISE, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

not;

not; and for the encouragement of such, who are married to heathens, I assure you that nothing can be more likely to gain your husbands to the christian faith, than their beholding the good effect of it, in your lives and conversations.

2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

2. When they see you so much exceed the heathen wives, in a meek and chaste behaviour; reverencing your husbands, and cheerfully performing what they require of you, in obedience to the laws of Christ.

3 Whose adorning, let it not be that outward *adorning*, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel:

3. Which that you may most effectually do, don't employ your pains and time in adorning your persons, by nice plaiting your hair; or decking yourselves in chains of gold; or in the wearing of rich and sumptuous apparel, which indeed are only sought after by vain and lewd women, who only design to deceive foolish and ignorant men:

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

4. But do you study to approve yourselves to your own husbands, by the government of your passions, and by acquiring those true and valuable ornaments of the mind, which will fit you for an eternal duration: therefore possess your breasts, with tender and kind dispositions; and behave yourselves under every circumstance of life, with patience and meekness; that by a quiet and submissive behaviour you may gain upon even unreasonable men; which temper and disposition of mind is highly valuable in the sight of God, and will receive from him a very great reward.

5 For after this manner in the old

5. And do not think, that by these precepts, I oblige you to any new

new duty ; for thro' all the ages of the world, the wisest and best women have practis'd after the same manner ; and all who have feared God, have always thought themselves obliged to reverence and obey their husbands ;

6. Of which obedience we *Israelites* have the most eminent example, in the person of *Sarah* the pious wife of our father *Abraham* ; to whom she yielded a constant subjection in all her actions ; and which she testify'd by calling him her lord, and head : [*Gen. xviii. 12.*] in whom we justly glory, not only in that he was the head of our nation, but also as being one of the best of men : and you will prove yourselves to be the true daughters of your obedient and holy mother, if, following her example, you suffer nothing to discourage you from a steady practice of your duty.

7. And as the wife ought to be diligent in performing her duty to her husband ; so ought the husband to be very careful to practise those duties towards his wife, to which he is oblig'd by his most holy religion ; which requires every man to have but one wife, for whom he is to forsake father and mother, and being united in one interest, to love and cherish her ; and forsaking all others, to cleave to her alone ; and by consulting her temper, and constitution, and complying with her, in all her reasonable desires, constantly guard against all those temptations, which the weakness of her sex might expose her to ; always esteeming yourselves as joint heirs of that eternal

time, the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands ;

6 Even as *Sara* obeyed *Abraham*, calling him Lord : whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life ; that your prayers be not hindered.

inheritance, which God has provided for you : therefore carefully preserve your mutual love and esteem for each other ; that you may together put up your united prayers to God, without any discomposure or disorder of mind ; which any disagreement between you would certainly occasion, and which would be a very great hindrance in your christian progress.

8 Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous :

9 Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing : but contrariwise, blessing ; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil,

8. Lastly, let me beseech all of you to cultivate the same temper of mind ; sincerely loving and treating one another with the utmost kindness and compassion ; ever ready to perform all the kind offices of friendship, as common brethren ; aiding and assisting each other in all your wants, and necessities ;

9. And do not suffer your minds to be ruffled or discomposed, by any ill treatment, either by word or action ; which would lead you to such resentment, as is directly contrary to that spirit of love, and peace, which we are obliged to cultivate : but let us follow the example of our Lord and Master, in returning blessings for revilings ; for God has call'd us out of a state of wickedness and rebellion, that we should be made partakers of no less a blessing than immortal life ; let us therefore show the sense we have of his goodness, in forgiving our enemy, and using our utmost endeavours that he also may partake of the same blessing.

10. And this indeed is also the way to pass comfortably thro' this present life, agreeably to the royal Psalmist ; [*Psal.* xxxiv. 12.—16.]

Who

Who (says he) desires to pass his life with ease and satisfaction, and to succeed in his affairs? let him keep his tongue from speaking evil of others, and himself from all hypocrisy and deceit:

and his lips that they speak no guile.

11. Let him injure no man, but be always ready to do all the good he is able, and as far as possible promote the peace and happiness of all about him; not suffering the wickedness of men to break in upon his good disposition, nor prevent his constant putting it in practice.

11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12. And let him know for his encouragement, that the Almighty sees and approves him, and will hear and regard all his prayers, which he puts up to him with a mind possess'd with universal love and goodness. But for all those, who give themselves up to work iniquity, and injure and oppress their neighbour, God will cut them off in the midst of their wickedness.

12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears, *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.

13. And the truth of what the Psalmist says, experience confirms to you; and he must be very wicked, who would hurt a kind and good man, for being so.

13 And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14. But if you should be called to suffer for your steady adhering to your christian profession, and righteously opposing the vicious and idolatrous practices of the heathens around you; esteem it your great happiness, as being in a particular manner pronounced blessed by our Lord himself: therefore let not their threats discompose you, neither be terrify'd at their cruelties.

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy *are* ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

16 Having a good conscience; that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, (that he might bring us to God) being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

15. But let your whole endeavour be to approve yourselves to the righteous governour of the world; [*Isai. viii. 12, 13.*] and depending on his assistance, be always ready cheerfully to give an account of your faith, and the reason of it; shewing by your sober, decent, and meek behaviour, that what you do is in obedience to, and in the fear of, God:

16. Whereby you will preserve your consciences pure and blameless, and will at least shew the falsity of your accusers, who would represent you as evil doers; while your modest and sober conversation, conducted suitably to the laws of Christ, declares the contrary.

17. And therefore if God in his good providence should think fit to call us to suffering, let us be very careful that we do not suffer as evil-doers by disobeying the government we are under, but only for doing our duty in obedience to the laws of God, and then we shall not fail of our reward; whereas if we suffer for our faults, it is no more than we deserve; and no reward will accompany it.

18. But if we suffer for well-doing, we then have Christ for our example; that holy and just one, who gave his life for a sinful world, that he might restore us to the favour of God; and who did indeed lose the life he possessed here in a human body; which was so far from being any real injury to him, whatever it was designed by his persecutors, that, on the contrary, he was raised again from the dead, by the Spirit

Spirit of God, and crown'd with eternal glory and honour.

19. And it was by the same Spirit, that our Saviour in the days of his flesh preach'd to the *Jewish* nation, who were in *Bondage* to the Mosaick rites: * but they being tied down by their lusts and temporal interests, refused their deliverer; for which a judgment is just ready to fall upon them, as terrible as that which fell on the old world,

20. Who rejected the preaching of *Noah*, whom God sent mercifully to forewarn them for the space of one hundred and twenty years, whilst the ark was preparing: for this disobedience, God sent a flood of water, which destroy'd the whole human race, excepting eight persons, *viz.* *Noah* and his family; who were saved by the ark appointed of God for that purpose.

21. This ark was a type of the christian baptism, by which we are enter'd into the church of Christ, as a place of refuge from the destruction of the world; not that the bare washing with water, which can only cleanse and purify the flesh, can entitle us to the christian salvation, but the doing of it in a conscientious obedience to the mind of God made known to us by Jesus Christ, attended with a suitable practice, in the constant course of a virtuous and christian life: And that

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of *Noah*, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water.

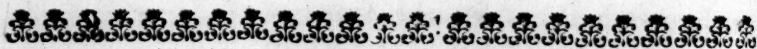
21 The like figure whereunto *even* baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

* There are several other senses given of this most difficult passage, which, as they depend for the most part on critical niceties, I shall not trouble the reader with.

this obedience will entitle us to the christian salvation, we are assured, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead;

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him.

22. Whom we saw visibly ascend into heaven, where he is seated at the right hand of God, to intercede for all those who believe his doctrine, and obey his laws; all the heavenly and angelic orders being subjected to, and placed under, him; to be employ'd by him in the salvation of mankind.



C H A P. IV.

The happy effects of suffering, after the example of Christ, ver. 1. Character and condemnation of persecutors, 4. The preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, 6. The approaching end of the Jewish state, and duty of the christians in view of it, 7. An earnest exhortation to charity and hospitality, 8. And to be good and faithful stewards of the several gifts they had receiv'd, for the good of the church, and the glory of God, 10. Farther encouragements to suffer persecution, 12. Christians should take care that they do not suffer as evil-doers, 15. If faithful christians suffer so much here, how terrible will be the end of wicked men and ungodly persecutors, 17. Persecuted christians may safely, and should chearfully, commit themselves to God, 19.

1 **F**Orasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the

1. **S**EEING then, we are restored to the favour of God, by the death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ; let us carefully prepare our minds, if it is the will of God to call us to a state of sufferings for his sake, chearfully to submit to it, and resolutely

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lutely follow the example Christ has set us: the cultivating this disposition will have a very good effect upon us, and make us very diligent in our obeying his laws, and careful how we offend him.

2. For no one who has so closely attended to his duty, as to be ready to sacrifice all the allurements of this world, and life itself to it, can suffer himself to be led away by those foolish and criminal pleasures, and vanities, which the heathens are wholly given up to; but having his affections duly placed on the future state, will carefully apply himself to obey the will of God, that he may be approved by him, whose approbation can only be obtain'd, by renouncing this present world and all the lusts of it.

3. And those who are thoroughly convinc'd of the lost and deplorable state into which they were sunk, and from what a dreadful destruction they are recover'd by Jesus Christ, will be so far from desiring to return to their former course of life, that they will reflect with the utmost detestation, on those vicious practices which they were then wholly addicted to, when instead of improving their powers, and acquiring holy and righteous habits, they spent their time in all lewdness, and drunkenness, in nightly riots, and intemperate feasting, and in the horrible worship of idols and demons; in which they were guilty of every thing that was wicked, inhuman, and barbarous.

4. It's true indeed, that those who are guilty of these vicious practices,

flesh, hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange, that having

you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you :

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

6 For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

having lost all sense of virtue and goodness, are astonish'd that you quit those ways, which are so agreeable to them, and refuse any longer to join with them, in their detestable vices ; and therefore looking on you, as opposers of their pleasures, represent you as enemies to mankind, and treat you as the vilest of persons.

5. But let them know, that for all these actions, they shall give a strict account to Jesus Christ, whose faithful followers they persecute, and whom God has constituted the judge of all mankind ; who will execute the severest judgments on ungodly and wicked persecutors ; but will bestow on all those, who love and obey him, eternal life.

6. For which merciful purpose, the gospel of Christ has been also diligently preached to the *Gentiles*, who were drown'd in all manner of lusts and idolatries, dead in trespasses and sins, dead to every thing that is good and praise-worthy ; that being made sensible of their condition, and the dreadful consequences of their practices, they might alter their whole conduct, and spend the remainder of their lives in holiness, and a chearful obedience to the christian institution : and this great favour God shews to the *Gentiles*, who are now taken into his family, and fill that place in which the *Jewish* nation once stood, out of which they have thrown themselves by their rejecting the Lord of life and glory, whom they still continue to oppose, not only by persecuting his faithful followers, but by exciting the

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the idolatrous *Gentiles* to the like practices :

7. For which cause, God is just ready to pour out the most severe judgments upon them ; which will intirely dissolve their government, and put an end to their present state, which will carry in it some faint resemblance of that more terrible destruction, in which the whole world of the ungodly shall be involv'd : in the view of this terrible desolation, behave yourselves with great sobriety, and meekness ; offering up your prayers to God, both for yourselves, and your brethren, of the *Jewish* nation ; that they may be preserved in that day of righteous vengeance :

8. To which end, cultivate with great care, a disposition of love and benevolence ; which is the most excellent and noble habit of the human mind : there being no Disposition, which qualifies us for usefulness, and society, like it ; and of this your experience daily convinces you, when you observe, how ready you are to forgive and pass over, even the greatest and most numerous faults of those you love : the practice of this duty will in a particular manner also recommend you to the mercy of God.

9. And as a proof that you have really acquired this kind and beneficent temper ; be ready on all occasions to communicate to one another what your several necessities call for, with chearfulness and alacrity.

10. And if you are to act as good stewards, in dispensing the necessaries of this life, to one another ;

7 But the end of all things is at hand : be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves : for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the how

same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange

how careful ought you to be in the use of those spiritual gifts, which the holy spirit has pour'd out upon you for the immediate service of the church of Christ: and whereas God has thought fit to bestow different gifts, on different persons; let every one be ready to communicate of that gift which he has receiv'd, to all who stand in need of it, without pride or ostentation; whereby you will indeed approve yourselves just and faithful stewards of those gifts, which you receiv'd, not upon your own account, but for the use and advantage of the whole society.

11. But further, if any man takes upon him to be an instructor of others, let him deliver nothing but what is agreeable to the word of God: and if any man is willing to do the office of a deacon, let him give himself up to the service of the church, with a willing mind, cheerfully employing his talent with which God has intrusted him; that every thing may be done in order and decency, to the glory of the only true God thro' Jesus Christ, for whose sake all these gifts and favours are poured out upon you. To which only true God let all mankind unite in the highest ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving for our redemption by Christ Jesus, and universally submit to his supreme authority and power, not only now but thro' eternal ages. amen.

12. Having, my beloved, given you these necessary rules for your behaviour in this present evil world; let me now in a particular manner instruct you in that difficult part of

a chrittian's life, of suffering for the truth; and there is the more reason for it because this wicked and fiery spirit of persecution, begins already to show itself, not only in *Judea*, but in several parts of the gentile world, stir'd up by the fury and rage of the unbelieving *Jews*; who continue to act with the same spirit with which they crucified the Lord of life and glory: which indeed was only following the steps of their forefathers who treated the holy and pious men of every age in the same manner; and therefore don't be surprized at any sufferings you may be called to; for it is no more than what the best of men have passed thro' before you:

13. And indeed, if you make a just estimate of things, you will find, you have much more reason to rejoyce than to be afflicted at any ill-treatment you may endure for the sake of Jesus Christ; for as Christ suffer'd in the flesh, and, as a reward for those sufferings, is raised to a superabundant and inconceivable glory; so if you are made partakers with him, in his sufferings, when he shall appear publicly invested with that glory to render to every one according to his works, you also shall be cloath'd with the same glory, and shall stand approved by men, angels, and God himself.

14. The prospect of this exceeding great happiness, if you duly attend to it, must, in the midst of all your sufferings, fill your minds with unspeakable joy; which happiness is assured to you by the divine aid

thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy,

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon and

68 A PARAPHRASE on Chap. IV.

You : on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other mens matters.

16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed ; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God : and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ?

and assistance of the Spirit of God, who will support and strengthen you while you continue steddy in the discharge of your duty ; who truly do honour to your most holy religion while you faithfully own and obey it ; notwithstanding all the reproaches, and injuries, that cruel and wicked men load you with.

15. But be sure that none of you who profess the holy and pure doctrine of Christ, suffer from the magistrate, for murder, or theft, or for opposing your governours, or concerning yourselves in affairs, which don't belong to you ; whereby you will be so far from receiving a reward from your Lord and master, that you will be punish'd in a most exemplary manner, for dishonouring your most holy religion.

16. But if any man is call'd to suffer, because in obedience to God he has submitted to his revelation, made by Jesus Christ ; let him publicly acknowledge his faith in Christ, and adore the goodness of God, who has enabled him patiently to endure all manner of injuries, for his sake.

17. And this advice is very necessary at this time, when according to our Lord's predictions, his faithful followers must suffer persecution, for the trial of their fidelity and patience, and for a proof that no temporal inconveniences can turn them from the steddy pursuit of truth and virtue. But if God permit such sufferings to befall those who fear and obey him, and whom he loves, and approves ; how terrible will those judgments be, which he will execute

Chap. IV. *the Ist. of St. P E T E R.* 69

execute on those, who despise his kind offers of grace and mercy, and persecute those who comply with them?

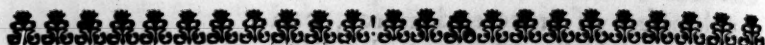
18. And if the just and religious part of mankind are to pass thro' such fiery trials; what certain and dreadful destruction must the wicked, in general, and the *Jewish* nation, in particular, be involved in; who have not only impiously rejected the Saviour of the world, but have with the utmost rage persecuted all who believe in him?

19. Seeing then those fiery trials which God permits us to be exercised with, are only in order to our refining and purifying; that we might be fitted for a greater degree of glory, in a better state; let us cheerfully submit to them, resigning ourselves intirely to his disposal in life or death; who, as he first made us, is both able and knows how to save us; and whose goodness, and faithfulness, will make all our sufferings, turn to our very great glory, and advantage.

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.





C H A P. V.

The duty of elders or pastors, ver. 1. The glorious reward of those who are faithful in the discharge of it, 4. The duty of younger and elder persons one towards another; with an exhortation to humility, Resignation to the will of God, and trust in him, sobriety, watchfulness, and perseverance, 5. The Apostle's prayer for the Christians, 10. The conclusion, 12.

1 **T**HE elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed :

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

1. **A**ND you the several bishops and teachers in the church of Christ, attend to my instructions, who am not only a teacher myself, but have received my commission immediately from Jesus Christ; of whose sufferings I was an eye witness, and which I testify to the world; notwithstanding the sufferings I am exposed to for so doing; in the assured hopes of being a partaker of that glory and honour, which those who obey him shall possess in the day of righteous retribution.

2. As such an one I exhort you faithfully to discharge the trust committed to you in the church of Christ; in both diligently instructing those who are under your care, and watching over their conduct; performing your duty chearfully and with a willing mind, from a sincere desire of promoting the salvation of mankind; and not from a slavish fear of what you may suffer from a neglect of your duty: much more beware

beware of a base and covetous disposition, or the desire of obtaining the false riches which perish in the possessing; but perform your duty from the noble principle of doing good, and being the means, in the hand of God, of bringing others to the same happiness, which you have attain'd to.

3. And in the discharge of this great and important trust, carefully guard your minds from the very first rise of pride and ambition, which so powerfully govern in the rulers of this world; lest you fall into the condemnation of the devil: therefore be very careful not to tyrannize over those, who by their complying with the christian institution are immediately set apart to be the Lord's people, and by him constituted a holy and royal priesthood; but consider yourselves, as having no other authority over them, but what you receive from Jesus Christ, to whom you stand accountable: and whatever superiority the dignity of your office may confer upon you, shew yourselves worthy of it, by being eminent examples of patience, meekness and compassion, and of every thing that is good and praise worthy; particularly in imitating the pattern your Lord has set you, of laying down your lives for the brethren:

4. Which if you faithfully perform, when Jesus Christ, the great distributor of rewards and punishments shall appear, he will bestow upon you a reward infinitely superior to all these temporary honours, even a crown of never fading glory; and raise you to an exalted station in the

3 Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being examples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

heavenly

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

heavenly mansion, which shall never have an end.

5. Let the young persons always reverence and respect the elder, which is but an equitable and due procedure, and will preserve that order and decency, without which the reputation of your societies can't be kept up: not that hereby I give any power to the elder, to behave themselves imperiously to the younger; but would have you all pleased with doing good to one another, even to the utmost of your power; and recommend it in particular to the aged, to perform every act of goodness to those who are young, with the same readiness as tho they were their inferiors in age; and thereby all of you perfect yourselves, in the great virtue of humility: for God will destroy the proud, and imperious man; but the meek and lowly, he will guide to eternal life. [Prov. iii. 34.]

6. And the perfecting yourselves, in this amiable disposition, will mightily prepare you for the fiery trial which is coming upon you, by that patient and submissive temper which you will acquire by the practice of it. And as it will qualify you for a state of suffering, so it will be a means to raise you to a more exalted state of glory.

7. Therefore chearfully performing your duty, commit yourselves to the allwise conduct of God; for he takes notice of all you endure for righteousness sake, and will in due time manifest his regard for you.

8. Where-

8. Wherefore seeing you have such a reward before you, be very careful, during your passage thro' this world, of all your actions, and diligently watch over yourselves, lest you should be tempted under the approaching trials to let go your integrity, and so lose your reward; for know that the evil one, your great adversary, who is at the head of this persecution, and the grand promoter of all the opposition which is made to religion and virtue in the world, is now greatly enraged, like a hungry lion rob'd of his prey, who goes roaring, seeking whom he may devour; and employing all his power to seduce you:

9. Whom oppose by being superior to all the rage of your persecutors; steadily professing your faith in Christ: which is no more than what your christian brethren have and are now doing, in several parts of the world.

10. And I beseech the God and father of all mercy and favour, who hath called us by Jesus Christ to the possession of an eternal inheritance, in glory, that after he hath purify'd you by these short sufferings, and proved your faithfulness to him; he would make these very sufferings turn to the perfecting of your patience; the establishing your faith; the strengthening your hope; and settling you in your steady adherence to the laws of Christ.

11. Now to the God of all grace and mercy be ascribed all praise, and thanksgivings, as to the author of all the good we enjoy; and may his supreme power, and authority,

L

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour;

9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

be

be submitted to, thro' eternal ages.
Amen.

12 By Silvanus a faithful brother unto you (as I suppose) I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying, that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

12. I send this short epistle by *Silvanus*, who I trust is a faithful brother in Christ Jesus, which I assure you in the most solemn manner contains nothing but that dispensation of grace and mercy which God has manifested to the world by Jesus Christ; at the same time testifying that it is alone by your obedience to it, that you are entitled to his favour.

13 The church that is at Babylon elected together with you, salute you; and so doth Marcus my son.

13. The church of Christ, which is at *Babylon*, whom God has chosen together with yourselves to be heirs of an eternal inheritance, wish you all prosperity; as doth also *Marcus*, who faithfully attends me in the work of the ministry, as a dutiful son.

14 Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

14. Salute one another with the kiss of love, in token of your sincere affection to one another. May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, always remain on you, and on all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. *Amen.*



A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

Second Epistle of St. Peter.

C H A P. I.

The salutation, ver. 1. He reminds them of the blessings of the gospel, with the end and design of them, 3. He exhorts and encourages them to diligence and perseverance in their christian profession and practice, 5. His care and concern to remind them of these things, 12. Because he was assur'd of the divine authority of what he taught, particularly as to the future glory of the Messiah, as king and judge of the world; a representation of which he had been an eye and ear-witness of in his transfiguration, 16. The prophecies of the old testament declare this truth, which the christians are exhorted to attend to, 19.

1. **SIMON PETER** an eye witness of the life and sufferings, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, write this second letter to you of the lost house of *Israel*, who are dispersed throughout *Asia Minor*; who with sincere and honest minds have believed the christian religion, and thereby become partakers with us,

SIMON Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ :

in the assured hope of an incorruptible and eternal inheritance; to which you are entitled, thro' the mercy and favour of God, by complying with that law of righteousness, which he hath appointed by Jesus Christ, who has restored us to the favour of God by the shedding of his most precious blood, and thereby deliver'd us from the destruction of this evil world, and raised us to an immortal and heavenly life in glory.

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you thro' the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

2. I pray God you may so carefully attend to this gracious dispensation, given us from God, by Jesus Christ our Lord and lawgiver, that daily growing in understanding, and practising accordingly, you may be prepar'd for a most exalted state of glory, and in the mean time possess that true peace which only flows from the hopes of being approved by him.

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

3. In which if we should be deficient, we should be the most inexcusable of all men; since the one supreme God has mercifully condescended to deliver us from a state of darkness and ignorance, by clearly discovering to us all those duties, the practice of which will perfect our natures, and fit us to be set apart for his service, and consequently prepare us for immortal life: and this discovery he hath made by our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we are call'd to the practice of a godly, righteous and pure life, by those glorious attestations which he has given to the *truth of christianity* by his resurrection from the dead, and the powerful effusions of his Holy Spirit; together

together with the miraculous operations which accompanied it :

4. By whom God hath given us the greatest and most valuable promises, (even of eternal life and glory) to encourage us to the steady practice of our duty ; that having conquer'd our passions and appetites, and subjected all our desires to the will of God and the reason of things ; we may possess that divine disposition, which fits us to imitate the most perfect being, in constantly pursuing what is righteous, just, and good, without any variation : and since we have receiv'd from God all necessary assistance to make us holy and happy, let us make it the business and study of our lives, to serve him unblameably, and in the most perfect manner.

5. And whereas we sincerely believe the christian religion, let us add to our belief, courage and resolution, openly to confess and avow it ; to which resolution let us join a diligent examination of the laws and doctrines of christianity, that we may both understand its great end and design, and know what it requires of us ;

6. Which will lead us to the greatest moderation in the things of this life, and make us diligent to restrain all our irregular desires ; whereby we shall be prepared for a patient submission to the will of God, and made chearfully to embrace any sufferings, to which he may in his wise providence think fit to call us. Have therefore your minds always fill'd with the highest love,

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises ; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ;

6 And to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ;

and

and reverence to the divine majesty, so that placing all your hopes in his approbation, you may have all the powers of your minds conform'd to his will;

7 And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

7. Which disposition will raise in your breasts, the most intense and fervent love to your christian brethren, even to the laying down your lives for them; as Christ laid down his life for us: to all which be careful to add a universal love to all mankind; doing to all as you would be done unto; chearfully forgiving those who have injured you, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

8. In which habits if you are careful to perfect yourselves, your knowledge of the christian religion will have its proper effect upon you, by its preparing you for the practice of every good work, and bringing you to a steady conformity to the laws of God.

9 But he that lacketh these things, is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

9. Whereas the man who boasts of his knowledge in christianity, and submits not to its righteous and equitable laws, is entirely ignorant of its great end and design, being under the government of his lusts and passions; and hath forgot his very first engagements, when he was admitted into the church of Christ by baptism, by which he renounced all his former vicious courses, and gave himself up to a life of righteousness, godliness, and temperance.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

10. Therefore, my beloved brethren, being call'd to the practice of all these most amiable virtues by your pure and holy religion, see that you are very diligent in the performing of them; which will secure to you

you all the blessings of the gospel, to which God in his great mercy hath call'd you, and to this very end hath chosen you, that you might be a holy people, zealous of good works ; which if you perform with sincerity, God who sees your sincerity, will preserve you in all the trials to which you may be exposed, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear ; so that you shall not finally fall away nor miscarry ;

11. But being approved by God the righteous judge of all, you shall in that day, when he shall judge the world by Jesus Christ, be highly applauded for your faithful obedience, and raised to an exalted station in that everlasting kingdom of righteousness, to which Jesus Christ will bring all those who love and obey him.

12. Seeing therefore all our hopes of the favour of God, and our being own'd by Christ for his disciples, in the day of judgment, depends on our sincere and universal obedience ; I cannot be too careful to remind you of these important truths, tho you have already been well instructed in them ; to the end that your attention may be so firmly fix'd on these christian duties, that you may practise them with all chearfulness and alacrity ; as knowing they are absolutely necessary to your future approbation and happiness.

13. And since (as I said before) it is not only the knowing our duty, but the keeping our minds intent upon it, that will make us uniformly perform it ; I think myself bound

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance :

to lay hold of every opportunity, while I am with you in this world, to press you to a faithful discharge of it:

14 Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

15 Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

14. Which I am the more solicitous of doing, because the time draws very near, when, according to the prediction of my Lord and master Jesus Christ, [*John* xxi. 18, 19.] I must lay down my life in attestation of the truth of the christian religion.

15. I shall therefore do my endeavour, that even after my decease you may be reminded of the things which you have been taught, both by me and my brethren.

16. For we have not imposed upon you cunningly invented lies and forgeries, for the promoting any worldly or temporal views; the truth of which you may be assured of, by our chearfully submitting to all manner of difficulties, for the propagation of the gospel in general, and of that great and important truth in particular, that Jesus Christ will come again from heaven, with great power and glory, to render to every man according to his works: A faint resemblance of this glory I myself with two other apostles were eye-witnesses of.

17. For we were with him in the mount, when being array'd with inexpressible glory, so that our eyes were not able to behold him, he was honour'd by the supreme God, with a voice, which proceeded immediately from the magnificent glory, which at the same time appear'd above us, saying, This is my beloved

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him ; [*Matt. xvii. 1, &c.*]

18. The truth of which fact, we in the most solemn manner declare, and that we heard this voice, while we were with him in the holy mountain.

19. But tho this fact be a convincing proof, that our Lord was invested with great glory and power, by the supreme God ; yet we refer you to those more sure prophecies of his future glory, when he shall appear the universal judge of men and angels, which are recorded in the prophetic books of the old testament *, which you will do well carefully to examine, as what will afford you great light into the character of the *Messiah*, and into that great power and dignity which God will invest him with ; and will help greatly to confirm and strengthen your faith, till his power shall in a more sensible manner be manifested to you, by that terrible destruction, which he is just ready to execute on the *Jewish* nation, who refused him to reign over them : which eminent display of his kingly authority, like

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mountain :

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy ; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts :

* Several senses have been given of this passage. To me that given in the paraphrase seems the most probable ; which does not suppose that the prophecies of the old testament were in themselves more sure than the fact of our Lord's transfiguration ; but only a more sure proof of what the apostle here brings them for, viz. of Christ's future glory as king and judge of the world : for the transfiguration was only a faint resemblance and presage of this power and glory which the *Messiah* should be invested with ; whereas the prophecies here refer'd to were so many direct predictions of that power and glory.

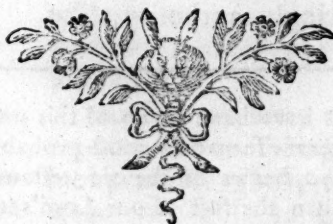
the rising of the morning star, whose light is a sure presage of the returning day, will evidence to you this great and important truth, which you have been taught from your very first entrance into christianity, that Jesus Christ will at the end of the world appear with imperial glory and dignity, to render to every one according to his works.

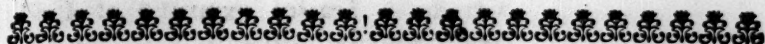
20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as *they were moved by the holy Ghost.*

20. And that your study of these prophecies may be of the greatest use to you, lay this down to yourselves as a certain truth, that the prophecies of the old testament were not the weak guesses or suggestions of fallible men;

21. For the predictions of the prophets were not enthusiastical dreams of heated and warm imaginations; but pious and holy men, set apart by God for that purpose, deliver'd such important truths, as were suggested to them by the Holy Spirit, for the instruction and encouragement of the sober and religious part of mankind.





C H A P. II.

He forewarneth them of false teachers, who shall allure and seduce many, ver. 1. He denounceth the dreadful condemnation of such Men; which he confirms by the example of the fallen angels, the old world, and Sodom and Gomorrah, 3. He largely describes the manners and vicious practices of these wicked seducers, 10. The danger of being seduc'd by them, 18.

1. **N**OT but that in those antient times there were wicked and ungodly persons, who for base and worldly ends made pretences to the same Spirit of prophesy; but they were easily discoverable both by the things they predicted and by their selfish views and ambitious designs: and this is necessary for you to know; because, according to what our Lord has foretold, you will in a little time have seducers arise among you, who will endeavour to turn you from the gospel of Christ, who by insensible and artful management will undermine the purity of the christian institution, and bring in opinions that are destructive of a holy and pure life; whereby they renounce the righteous governour of the world who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who had redeem'd them from their former vain conversation by no less a price than by the blood of his only begotten Son. But let them know, however they may flatter themselves, that they shall be overtaken with a

1 **B**UT there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

sure and speedy destruction, and made a fearful example of God's righteous judgment.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

2. Yet this judgment shall not overtake them till they have been first permitted to practise all their wiles upon you for a trial of your faith and obedience; and they shall deceive many, who not having duly attended to the great design of Christianity, which is to restrain and limit our affections and pleasures, will be betray'd by their deceitful and false reasonings, into vicious and impure practices; whereby they will dishonour the gospel, and bring a reproach on their most holy religion.

3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingreth not, and their damnation slumbreth not.

3. And whereas the hopes and expectations of these seducers are limited to this present world, being greedily bent after the perishing riches thereof, they will make a prey of you, robbing you of your substance under the pretence of discovering strange and supernatural mysteries; while they silyly introduce all manner of ungodliness and filthy impurities among you: upon whom the righteous judgment of God, threaten'd many ages ago, will be swiftly executed; and they shall be overwhelm'd with a sudden destruction.

4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

4. And that God will thus severely punish these impious persons, will plainly appear to any one, that attentively considers, that when the very heavenly beings, so much superior to us, violated the righteous laws of the governour of the world, he banish'd them the celestial mansions of glory and happiness, and precipi-

precipitated them into a dark and dismal prison, to which they are confined till the day of righteous judgment; when a sentence shall be pass'd upon them, suitable to their demerits.

5. And after the same manner has the divine being dealt with the human race, having destroy'd the old world for their lusts and injustice; preserving only *Noah* and his family consisting of eight persons; which *Noah* was a holy and good man, and a publick preacher of righteousness; who endeavour'd to reform mankind: But they, rejecting his kind admonitions, were destroy'd, by God's bringing upon the earth an universal flood of water. [*Gen. vi, &c.*]

6. The like terrible instance of God's hatred of iniquity, we have in that surprizing destruction which he executed on *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; who for their unnatural lusts, and inhospitality, were at once consumed by a shower of inflam'd brimstone, [*Gen. xix,*] the marks of which ruin continue to this present day, a sensible example of God's righteous judgment against all wicked and ungodly actions.

7. And at the same time he deliver'd *Lot*, an hospitable and upright man, from that dreadful overthrow, whose pious mind abhor'd the lewd conversation of those impure citys:

8. For dwelling among them he could not avoid both the hearing and being an eye-witness of their brutish and most detestable behaviour; and being, as I said, a pious and good man, he was extremely

5 And spared not the old world, but saved *Noah* the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

6 And turning the cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* into ashes, condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

7 And delivered just *Lot*, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing, and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day, with *their* unlawful deeds) griev'd

griev'd at their wicked actions, so that his life became a burthen to him.

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

9. From all these examples both of the preservation of the just, and destruction of the wicked, we are sensibly taught that God will conduct all those who fear and obey him thro' all the temptations they may be expos'd to, and at length bring them to his everlasting kingdom; and that in the day of judgment he will sentence to inexpressible torments, all those who lead wicked and ungodly lives.

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government: presumptuous *are they*, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities:

10. And if God will execute such severe punishments on all his rational creatures who live not up to the light he affords them; how severe will that vengeance be, which he will execute on these impure seducers; who knowing God's righteous revelation of wrath against all who do evil, yet disgrace their most holy religion, and despise the mercy and favour of God, by giving up themselves to all fleshly defilements, and opposing the lawful authority under which they are placed; who under the pretence of superior knowledge assume a liberty which belongs not to them; being licentious, bold, and desperate; impiously speaking evil of superior orders of beings; first charging them with impurity, and then boasting of following them in those impurities:

11 Whereas angels which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

11. Whereas the good angels, who are every way superior, both in wisdom and power, to the evil spirits, when they give an account of their conduct to God, only relate real facts without any aggravations;

ventions; much less charge them with crimes they are ignorant of.

12. Whereas these impostors having given themselves up to their foolish lusts, have sunk all the powers of their minds, and thereby transform'd themselves into the very worst part of the brute creation, becoming ravenous and destructive beasts of prey; who, in their madness obtruding into things they know nothing of, disqualify themselves for every thing that is good and praise-worthy: but they shall be cut off in the midst of their wickedness, and destroy'd for ever.

13. In which punishment they will meet with a reward suitable to their loose and disorderly lives, who have drown'd all their powers in base and sordid pleasures, being guilty of all manner of excess and lewdness, even in the very day time; and thereby are not only spots and blemishes to christianity, but also to the human nature; who glory in their crimes, as tho they were the most commendable actions; whilst you feast and caress them, for their pretended discoveries:

14. Who have so habituated themselves to lustful habits, that they can't look even on a married woman, without impure desires, to which they are so enslaved, that they are not able to restrain themselves from them; employing all their art and subtilty to deceive and impose upon weak and inconsiderate persons; always contriving how they may best accomplish their base and sordid ends upon you, whereby they be-

12 But these as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption:

13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day-time: spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you;

14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practises; cursed children:

come

15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bofor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness ;

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity : the dumb ass speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet.

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error :

come children of the evil one, set apart for everlasting destruction.

15. Who having known the way of truth have forsook it from covetous and sensual dispositions, in which procedure they have exactly follow'd the pattern set them long ago by that impious person *Balaam* the son of *Bofor*, whose immoderate love to this world, and insatiable desire after riches, made him, contrary to his better knowledge, give pernicious advice for betraying the people of God :

16. In the beginning of which attempt he was severely rebuk'd by his ass, who speaking to him with a human voice, [*Numb. xxii. 28, 30.*] reproved his rash and implacable temper, which was so unworthy the character of a prophet ;

17. Whose example these seducers follow, who may fitly be compar'd to wells without water, and to clouds carry'd about by a strong wind, which prevents their watering the earth ; as pretending to great light and knowledge ; whereas those who trust in them are both disappointed and injur'd for their credulity : therefore God has reserved for these deceivers, the place of severest punishment in the other state, which they most justly deserve ;

18. Seeing their greatest boasts to new and supernatural light, tend only to betray weak and inattentive minds, (who by the mercy of God had been recover'd by the preaching of the gospel, from the vices and idolatries of the heathen) to the practice of every sensual and foolish lust ;

19. Not

19. Not considering that while these seducers promise to raise their followers to a high dignity, and great privileges, as having liberty, by their superior knowledge, of gratifying themselves in every sensual enjoyment; they themselves are the slaves of vile and depraved passions and appetites, to which they have subjected themselves: for let every one know, that as a man becomes subject to him, who overcomes him; so whoever gives himself up to his irregular desires, becomes a slave to those desires, and is led in bondage by them.

20. And as for those unhappy persons who are seduced and led astray by these deceivers, let them consider that if they suffer themselves to be again enslaved to those lusts, which they were formerly rescu'd from, by the preaching of the holy and pure doctrines of Jesus Christ our great lawgiver and deliverer, they are in a worse condition than they were in, during their former state of heathenism;

21. And it would have been much more tolerable for them never to have known God's gracious dispensation of mercy by Jesus Christ to those who obey him, than having been instructed in it, and resign'd themselves to its pure and holy laws, again to return to their former impieties, and give up themselves to a sensual and impure life.

22. But in these unhappy and miserable persons, are too truly verifi'd some of the wise remarks of our antient forefathers, who have so well describ'd them in their proverbial

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning:

21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit: speeches:

mit again; and, The sow that was wash'd, to her wallowing in the mire.

speeches: The dog is turn'd to his own vomit again, [*Prov. xxvi. 11.*] and the sow that was wash'd to her wallowing in the mire: Thereby signifying that a well regulated life can only be produced by constant watchfulness over our actions, and a steady regard to the divine laws.



C H A P. III.

He stirs them up to attend to the words of the prophets and apostles, ver. 1. He declares the certainty of the last judgment, against those wicked scoffers who denied it, 3. The long-suffering of God is design'd to bring men to repentance, 9. How the world shall be destroy'd, and how christians should behave in view of it, 10. The new heaven, and new earth, 13. Evil men wrest the scriptures to their own destruction, 16. He cautions the christians against being seduced, and exports them to perseverance, 17.

T His second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

I. THIS second letter, my dearly beloved, I write to you, to engage you, whose minds have been purify'd by the christian religion, to preserve that purity by a constant attention to your duty.

2. Particularly I would persuade you to possess your minds with the predictions of the holy prophets under the former dispensations, which point out those severe judgments, which God will execute upon these impious seducers, that you may be careful and diligent to avoid them; and with the righteous commands of Jesus Christ, which we his apostles and messengers have faithfully deliver'd

liver'd unto you ; that you may patiently resign yourselves to his disposal, from whom in due time you shall receive your reward.

3. And don't be surprized when you shall see these seducers arise among you, for they have been prophesied of from antient times. And whereas some will appear in disguise, and pretend to supernatural illumination, so others shall appear openly impious and profane, scoffing and making a mock at a religious and virtuous life, openly glorying in their lusts and prophaneness :

4. Who will proceed to such an height of impiety, as to deride those promises which God has made to them that fear him, of a day of retribution, in which he will judge the world in righteousness ; impiously saying, that notwithstanding the specious promises of those who pretended to know more of the will of God than others, yet we now see the falsity of those predictions ; for things have now continued for several thousand years in the same condition, one generation going off and another succeeding ; and thus it has been from the beginning of the world ; and we have no reason to believe they will ever be otherwise, but will continue in the same circulation for ever.

5. But if you examin into the characters of these scoffers, you will find them to be bold and ignorant men, who never attended to that light which God hath given to mankind ; and tho they arise out of the *Jewish* nation, yet dare to contradict the account which is given in

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying; where is the promise of his coming ; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water :

our sacred books of the antient constitution of the earth; particularly that the heavens were placed in the order they now are originally by God, by whom this earth was fitted for the reception of inhabitants by its different elevation; whereby its upper parts were raised above the water, while the lower were cover'd with water;

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.

6. Which as it fitted it for the support of the various orders of beings placed in it, so when the wickedness of mankind had rendred them unworthy any further favour, God brought upon them a deluge of water, by which the then constitution of the earth was destroy'd, with all its inhabitants; which destruction of the old world for its vices, is to every considerate person a very good proof that this earth shall also be destroy'd, and an end put to the present state of things.

7 But the heavens and the earth which are now by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.

7. But the destruction which this present earth with its atmosphere is to be involved in, is not to be effected with water as the other was; but God has determined to execute a more severe judgment on the greater iniquities of mankind; for since they will not be moved with his severity to the old world, nor all his kind invitations of mercy and favour which he bestows upon them, this earth shall be involv'd in an universal burning; the materials for which are already repositied against the day of righteous retribution, in which all the wicked and ungodly shall irretrievably perish.

8. And

8. And whereas it is objected that tho these predictions were made many ages ago, yet every thing continues to proceed in its regular course as in the beginning: I answer, that the very objection itself is a full proof of the great ignorance and folly of these scoffers; and I hope, my beloved, you don't want to be informed, that with the supreme being, who is of eternal duration, a thousand years is as one day, and one day as a thousand years; and therefore the deferring of it to any future time, however distant, will make no alteration in the strict performance of either his threatnings or his promises.

9. And therefore this forbearance of God is not to be look'd upon as any change of his purpose, or that he was indifferent in the performance of it; but is to be consider'd as the result of his infinite goodness, who bears with mankind notwithstanding their great provocations; as being willing that all men should become sensible of the terrible consequences of sin and iniquity; that reforming their lives, they might escape the condemnation of the world, and be saved in the day of the Lord.

10. Neither let these despisers of religion promise themselves any durable state of security from the present regular state of things, for that day of righteous recompence will come so suddain and unlook'd for, that it may very fitly be compar'd to the coming of a thief in the night, when no one has time

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, (as some men count slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the work that are

therein shall be burnt up.

to prepare against him: for this earth shall on a suddain, with all that is in it, be involved in an universal burning: The air itself shall be dissipated with a great noise, and all the various particles which are dispersed in it shall become a shower of liquid fire, and the whole world with all who have follow'd the lusts of it, shall be burnt up and consum'd for ever.

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

11. Seeing then this whole state of things shall be changed by that fire which God will kindle for the punishment of the wicked, how careful ought we to be that our conversation and behaviour be suitable to the gospel of Christ;

12 Looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

12. And that we diligently obey all his righteous commands, which can alone fit us for, and make us joyfully expect that righteous day of accounts, when, as I said before, the very air shall be dissipated by the intense heat, and the elements run down a liquid fire?

13 Nevertheless, we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

13 But all this devastation of nature ought not to trouble or discompose us; for God out of this ruin has promised to provide a better habitation, *viz.* a renew'd heaven and earth, purg'd from all their present dross and impurities, [*Isai.* lxv. 17. lxvi. 22. *Rev.* xxi. 1.] which shall be possess'd by all those who fear and obey him, and from which all the wicked and ungodly shall be excluded for ever.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him

14. Seeing therefore, my beloved, you are convinced of the truth of these terrible and amazing changes which shall pass on all earthly things; be very watchful over the dispositions

tions of your own minds, and the course of your lives; study and follow after the things which make for peace, and take care to avoid every outward blemish, and inward defilement; whereby you will be prepar'd to appear irreproveable before him, pure and holy.

15. And whereas some have made a very ill use of the forbearance of God, in not having as yet executed his righteous judgments on the *Jewish* nation, taking occasion from thence to despise the justice of God; do you on the contrary, consider his forbearance and long suffering, as kindly intended to afford them a longer space to reflect on their heinous impieties in crucifying the Lord of life and glory; that so repenting of their great wickedness they may submit to his authority, and become sharers in our common salvation: the same use also our beloved brother *Paul* makes of this forbearance of God, who by the Holy Spirit was let into the most sublime truths of christianity;

16. And has in all his numerous epistles declared these great and important doctrines, which indeed have some considerable difficulties attending them, both as being future, and in that we are not inform'd of all their particulars; which difficulties, inconsiderate and wavering persons, who never would be at the pains of carefully examining the scriptures, make use of, to the disadvantage of the prophetic parts of the old and new testament, as containing things which are false and fictitious, and thereupon renouncing

in peace, without spot and blameless:

15 And account *that* the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you;

16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things: in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they* do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

their

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness :

18 But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.

their faith, forfeit their right to the promises of the gospel, and again involve themselves in the condemnation of the world.

17. And now, my dearly beloved, having so fully caution'd you against these two sorts of deceivers, let me exhort you diligently to apply yourselves to the examination of your most holy religion, that when these impious seducers shall arise, you may not be led away, either by the delusions of the one or the reproaches of the others ; but, steadily opposing them, may preserve both your faith and integrity :

18. Whereby you will highly advance yourselves in the favour of God, who will continually afford you greater light and knowledge in his dispensation of grace and mercy, which he has manifested by Jesus Christ ; whom he hath appointed to be the great lawgiver, and deliverer, and judge of the fallen race of mankind : to whom, as our Lord and head under the one supreme God, be ascribed glory, praise and thanksgiving, as having compleated our redemption by his sufferings and death, both now and thro' eternal ages. *Amen.*



A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

First Epistle of St. John.

C H A P. I.

The truth and certainty of our Saviour's divine mission and doctrine, ver. 1. The excellence of the christian society, 3. The necessity of holiness in order to our becoming of this blessed society, and having our sins forgiven thro' the sacrifice of Christ, 5. The necessity of this sacrifice, as we have all been sinners; and of confessing and forsaking our sins, if we would be forgiven, 8.

MY dearly beloved converts, of whatsoever age or standing ye may be in the church, I write this epistle to you at a time when many seducers are gone out to deceive; that you may be preserved from their errors, and may continue in the pure faith of Jesus Christ: to which end I shall give you a distinct account both of the person and laws of the *Messiah*, whom God has sent for the salvation of mankind.

O

I. Know

THAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life :

2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)

1. Know then that this most excellent person, of whom I am about to write to you, existed before the worlds; by him the supreme God and Father of all made the worlds; and it is no less than this most excellent person who has been exhibited to us here on this earth; and that in so sensible a manner, that we have not only heard his divine discourses, but have also seen him with our eyes, and beheld him performing innumerable great and astonishing miracles during his life; and further have also view'd him with the greatest admiration, after his resurrection from the dead; of which he gave us the utmost evidence, by freely permitting us to examine his wounded hands and side, and by receiving us to his dearest embraces; by which resurrection from the dead, he is demonstrated to be the true *Messiah*, and the Saviour of the world.

2. For truly this divine person, to whom the Father hath given to have life in himself, and whose life is the light of men, did really become a man, and dwelt among us: the truth of which I assert in the most solemn manner, as having not only seen and known him, but also been so perfectly instructed by him, as to be able to give his laws in so clear a manner, as will enable you to partake of that everlasting life which he himself possesses: who, as I said before, existed with the Father from the beginning, but for our sakes became man and dwelt among us.

3. In

3. In this relation which I am about to make to you, I shall only faithfully relate what I myself have heard from and seen of him; that so having no doubt in your minds, concerning those great truths, you may more readily embrace his doctrine, and obey his laws, and thereby become one in society with us; which society is indeed the most excellent and noble, as being join'd with, and united to the God and Father of all, and his only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord;

4. Which things I inform you of, that your minds may be filled with the greatest joy, and satisfaction.

5. Now that you may be receiv'd into this blessed society, and have a right to its many and great privileges; it's necessary that I let you know, what is the condition which he has made indispensably necessary for your admission into it; which in short is this, that you lay it down as a certain and infallible truth, that God is holy, just and pure, and can by no means behold iniquity with approbation;

6. And therefore all pretences to any union with him, or favour from him, if we lead wicked and ungodly lives, are false and delusive, and will stand us in no stead:

7. But if our actions are conformable to the eternal laws of righteousness and truth, as are all the actions of the supreme governor of the world, then do we truly belong to that heavenly society, and all our past sins and offences shall really be blotted out, by that great sacrifice

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

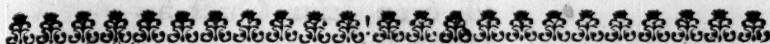
of atonement which Jesus Christ has made for us by his death :

8. Which atonement we every one stand absolutely in need of, as having broken the just and righteous laws of God ; and that man who is so presumptuous as to say, he has not violated the laws of God, and consequently stands in no need of this great sacrifice, is both a liar against the clearest evidence, and also miserably imposes upon himself ; who while he pretends to greater degrees of knowledge than others, shews himself to be ignorant of the most plain and necessary truths.

9. For herein consists our comfort, not that we have not sinned, for we have all been so unhappy as to have offended ; but that he who cannot lye hath promised us, that if being sincerely sorry for our sins, we acknowledge and forsake them, he will forgive us all our iniquities, and purify us from all unrighteousness, for the sake of Jesus Christ ;

10. Whereas by denying ourselves to be sinners, we contradict even God himself, who has sent his own Son into the world to save the sinful race of mankind ; and thereby forfeit all our right to the christian salvation.





C H A P. II.

We must carefully avoid sin; and then we may have the comfortable assurance that our past sins and present failings will be forgiven, thro' the sacrifice and intercession of Jesus Christ, ver. 1. The vanity of pretending to knowledge and to an interest in the blessings of the gospel, without a sincere obedience to the precepts of it, 3. A universal obedience to God's laws always requir'd of men, 7. The new command of the gospel, and the necessity of complying with it, 8. The apostle's affectionate address to three ranks of christians, 12. He cautions them against the immoderate love of the world; three sorts of worldly lusts; the different ends of those who are overcome by them and those who are not, 15. He cautions them against seducers; gives a short description of them; shews that they forfeit eternal life and all the blessings of the gospel, but the faithful being preserv'd by the assistance of the Holy Spirit shall certainly enjoy them; and earnestly exhorts them to perseverance in righteousness, and their christian profession and practice, if they would appear before Christ with joy at his second coming, 18.

1. **D**EARLY beloved whom I have begotten to the christian religion; I take this opportunity of acquainting you, that my great design in writing this epistle is, to preserve you from falling into sin, and breaking the just and righteous laws of the governour of the world; yet at the same time I think it necessary to inform you, that if you forsake your past sins, and conform yourselves to the precepts of the gospel, we have one to plead our

1 **M**Y little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

cause

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world.

3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

cause before the God and Father of all, even Jesus Christ his only begotten Son,

2. Who having in the flesh obey'd all the laws of his God and Father, and thereby prov'd himself a person absolutely righteous; provided also for the justification of all those who should in earnest turn from their sins and obey his holy doctrine: for he has by his death erected a mercy-seat in his own blood, where all our sins are forgiven, and not ours only but the sins of all those thro'out the whole world, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, who forsake their iniquities, and implore mercy of God for the sake of Jesus Christ; for whose sake also the many lesser faults and infirmities which we commit, being christians, shall be forgiven.

3. And that we are interested in this mediation of Christ, we have one sure and infallible test, in which we cannot be mistaken; *viz.* A universal obedience to all his commands.

4. But if any man pretends to understand the christian revelation, and to be interested in its benefits, without obeying its precepts, he belies that most excellent religion, and ought to be regarded as a wicked and impious man:

5. Whereas the man who attends to this divine institution of righteousness and goodness, and acts accordingly, in him is apparently answer'd the great end of God's sending his Son into the world; which was to purify us from all iniquity, and to make us holy, kind and good: by which

which disposition of mind, we assuredly know, we have a right to all the blessings purchased by his death, and are admitted into his blessed society.

6. And every man, whosoever he is, who pretends to be of this holy society, must evidence it by steadily obeying all the laws of Jesus Christ, in the like extensive and universal manner, as Jesus Christ himself obey'd all the laws of his God and Father.

7. My dearly beloved brethren, what I now write to you concerning a universal obedience to the laws of God, is not any new doctrine; but what you were told was absolutely necessary at your first admission into the christian church: a universal obedience to all the laws of God has at all times been absolutely necessary, even from the beginning of the world, under every dispensation which God has given to mankind.

8. But I now proceed to give you a commandment, which may properly be call'd a new one, as never appearing in its full light, till given us in the example, and enforced by the command, of Jesus Christ; I mean universal love and benevolence: which precept is exemplify'd in the fullest manner, in our Lord's giving his life for a sinful world; and his pattern is amiably followed by you, who shew yourselves to be his disciples indeed, by that universal love and kindness which you have so steadily practis'd ever since you have been converted to the christian religion; which procedure plainly proves the superior excellency of the christian institution;

6 He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning: the old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him, and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9. Under

9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

11 But he that hateth his brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his names sake.

9. Under which this law is so indispensably necessary, that the man who entertains any hatred in his mind against another, proves himself an unholy person, and thereby deprives himself of all the benefit of it;

10. Whereas he who in compliance with this law, cultivates a disposition of universal love and goodness, is truly a christian, and having by this principle purified his mind, and divested himself of every evil thought, his duty appears plain and clear before him; and having no false byass to turn him from it, he pursues it with chearfulness and alacrity:

11. Whereas the man who suffers his mind to be blinded by anger and malice, is so discomposed by those ungovernable passions, that he does every thing in a disturb'd and irregular manner: and the one may be fitly compar'd to a man, who has clear daylight for the managing of his affairs, whereby he performs them with pleasure and safety; but the other is like a man overtaken with the night, when the darkness makes every step to be attended with difficulty and danger.

12. It is with a great deal of pleasure, I write these things unto you, who are lately converted to the christian religion; because the consciousness of your obedience to these laws, will give you the comfortable assurance of the forgiveness of your offences for Christ's sake; whose laws you now so chearfully obey; not doubting, but you will still go on,

on in steady obedience to him who died for you.

13. With the same pleasure, I also write unto you, who are grown old in the christian religion, having been the first fruits of my ministry; and consequently are firmly fix'd in the great doctrines of christianity, and not to be imposed upon by any deceivers whatsoever, but steadily follow the example of Christ, whose life and laws you are so well instructed in.

With the same satisfaction of mind I also address myself to you, who have made a manly progress in our holy religion; and by a steady adherence to its laws, have so mortified every irregular desire, as thereby to be able to overcome all the temptations of the devil, and to practise that universal love and goodness, of which your Lord and master has set you so bright an example.

I again congratulate you my younger converts, because ye have approved yourselves to be the children of God, by your careful obedience to his laws.

14. And you who are the first fruits of my preaching, I rejoyce with you, that what I wrote to you formerly had so good an effect upon you, both in informing your minds in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, who existed with the Father from the beginning, and in perfecting your conformity to his laws. With the same pleasure I also remind you, who have made a good progress in the christian faith, of what I formerly wrote you, since it was a means of enlightning your minds, and confirming you in all holiness and obedi-

13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doth the will

ence, and thereby proves that it has had its proper effect on you, and demonstrates that you have overcome the wicked one.

15. And now, my beloved converts in whom I so justly glory, since you have made so great a progress in christianity, I have but one thing to caution you more immediately against; which is an immoderate love of this present world, and the suffering yourselves to be entangled by the allurements of it; and lay this down as a certain rule, that the man who gives himself up to the pleasures of this life, cannot attend to the laws of God; and whoever will carefully reflect upon them, will easily see how opposite they are to one another:

16. The enjoyments of this world consisting only, either in giving a loose to our sensual appetites; or in an insatiable desire after riches, and the pomps and vanities of this present world; or lastly, in the unreasonable grasping after power and authority, pleasing ourselves in our superiority over others, and treating with contempt those below us: the three great temptations to which the three great stages of life are exposed; all which must appear to every impartial enquirer, to be very opposite to that meekness, purity, and self-denial, which both natural and revealed religion require; and the end of their followers will be as different.

17. For as this present world shall in a little time be burnt up, and consum'd, and the wicked with it; so the man who resigns himself to the

the laws of God, and makes it his business to practise them, shall be admitted into the blessed mansions of life and glory, which shall never have an end.

18. My dear converts, you are now under the last dispensation of God to the world, and whereas you have from the beginning been instructed, that under that last period, there should arise out of the church, a power which should oppose Christ and his religion; I take this opportunity, both to inform and caution you, that there are several of these powers already risen; which demonstrate this to be the last period of time.

19. These opposers of Christ indeed are such, who once pretended to believe the christian religion, as well as yourselves; but they were not such as sincerely believed it, for if they had they would have continued in the practice of it; but having base and worldly views, they have discover'd their wicked purposes; and so have manifested themselves not to be sincere christians.

20. But you who have receiv'd our doctrine with honest and pure minds, have the truth of it demonstrated to yourselves by the extraordinary gifts and operations of the Spirit, whereby you have had confirm'd to you all those truths, in which you were instructed by me.

21. I therefore write not these things to you as supposing you are ignorant of them, but only to remind you of what you already know; lest for want of due care and at-

of God, abideth for ever.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.

20 But ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things.

21 I have not written unto you, because ye know not the truth; but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

tention,

22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ; he is anti-christ that denieth the Father and the Son.

23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also.

24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard

tention, these deceivers should by any means lead you astray.

22. And that I may most effectually guard you against these seducers, particularly mark those who deny Jesus to be the *Messiah* promised to mankind, in whom all the prophecies of the deliverer who was to come were fulfill'd. Whosoever shall dare to deny this great truth, renounces both that revelation made by the Father from the beginning of the world, first to *Adam* and the *Patriarchs*, and afterwards by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, to the *Jewish* nation; which every where points out a deliverer who was to come; and also renounces that most compleat revelation which God has made by his only begotten Son, who has fully answer'd all the marks and characters, given of him, before his appearance, and thereby hath demonstrated himself to be that *Messiah*, that good men in all ages have with impatience long'd for:

23. From whence it fully appears, that he who denies Jesus to be the Sent of God, rejects all that mercy and favour which God of his infinite goodness has offer'd mankind, and which he will bestow upon all those who acknowledging his mission, obey his laws. Be therefore very careful to keep stedfast to those doctrines wherein we have instructed you, in which if you continue immoveable, you will continue in the fellowship and favour of the Son of God, and of his eternal Father;

24. And in consequence thereof will have all those great blessings secured

secured to you, which are the happy result of that fellowship and favour :

from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

25. Particularly you will have that promise fulfill'd to you which is the glory of the gospel dispensation, the promise of eternal life : a life in comparison of which, your present condition does not deserve the name of life : a life suited to the perfection of your noblest faculties, attended with joys unspeakable, and which shall never have a period put to it. The Son of God came into the world that we might be deliver'd from a state of death ; that we might have life and have it more abundantly. And this is that happy life which he has promised to all those who stedfastly adhere to his doctrines.

25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life.

26. Thus have I endeavoured by faithful representation of these great truths, to guard you against the threatening apostasy.

26 These things have I written unto you, concerning them that seduce you.

27. But do not think I at all suspect you because I have wrote thus freely : I know that the kind and good Spirit of Jesus whom you obey has confirm'd all those truths to you, in which you were instructed by those extraordinary gifts which he first poured out upon you at your admission into the christian church ; which Spirit is also always present with you, who sincerely embrace the christian religion, by his more secret and invisible influences, to establish you in the truth ; that you will not think you stand in need of any new

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you : and ye need not that any man teach you : But, as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie : and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

or different instruction which these deceivers may pretend to bring, how plausibly soever they may address themselves to you: and whereas the good Spirit of God has thought you worthy of such instruction, confirming you in the greatest and most important truths, which he has demonstrated by the fore-mention'd extraordinary and miraculous operations; so I doubt not but thro' his secret yet not less effectual assistance, you will be enabled carefully to treasure them up in your minds, and practise them in your lives:

28 And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteousness, is born of him.

28. To the doing of which I can't too often exhort you. Therefore permit me again to intreat you as my dear children whom I have begotten to eternal life, carefully to treasure up these laws and doctrines in your minds, and practise them in your lives; by which alone you can appear before Christ at his second coming (when he shall render to every one according to his works) with confidence and great joy; for nothing but an holy and unblameable life can preserve you from being ashamed at his coming, and being condemn'd with the world:

29. For this you know, that as God himself is righteous and holy, so he will acknowledge none as his children, but such as renouncing all unrighteousness, and ungodliness of men, live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.



C H A P. III.

The exceeding great love of God in making us his children ; what treatment such must expect from a wicked world ; the unspeakable happiness included in this character ; and the natural consequence of the lively hope of it, ver. 1. Why christians must of necessity avoid sin, and lead righteous and holy lives, 4. Wicked men are the children of the devil, and only the good and righteous the children of God, 8. Love and charity inferc'd by a variety of arguments, 11.

I. **A**ND that I may stir you up to a steady and lively practice of the laws of God, and particularly of this great commandment of loving one another ; let me warm your breasts by recalling to your minds that exceeding great love which the supreme governour of the world, the God and Father of all, hath manifested to us, by sending this most excellent person, of whom I have been treating, into the world, not only as an instructor in righteousness, and a pattern of a holy and obedient life, but also to die for us ; that we being reduced under him who is the only begotten Son of God might by adoption be entitled to that most glorious character of being also the sons of God ; and this is the very reason why we are persecuted and reviled by the powers of this world, who having given themselves up to obey the wicked one refused to hear those gracious invitations which God made them by Jesus Christ, whom in re-

I **B**Ehold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God : therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

turn for all his goodness they put to death ; and therefore it's no wonder, but rather to be expected, that they should treat us in the same manner :

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.

2. But beloved this very treatment which we meet with from the world, is a certain proof that we really are the sons of God ; which glorious character tho it denotes something most excellent, yet what that is, is not as yet made manifest : but however thus far is revealed, that when Christ shall appear in judgment, he will appear cloathed with that glory which he possessed with the Father before the worlds were ; and whereas he is to receive us to himself, and we are to be with him for ever, we shall also be cloathed with the same glory ; whereby we shall be fitted for intimate conversation with him ; which clear view, uninterrupted by any of the snares and infirmities which here attend us, will transform us into a yet nearer and more happy resemblance : And by seeing him as he is, we shall conceive so perfect a love of him as will for ever secure this most blessed likeness to him.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

3. The natural consequence of which great expectation is this ; that every one who thorowly entertains it will in this present state of trial and difficulty, labour to gain as great a likeness as he can to his great Lord and master ; by purifying himself from all defilement, in conformity both to his precept and example.

4 Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth

4. And how reasonable it is that every christian should thus purify himself

himself must appear, if we only consider what sin is; he who sins breaks the laws of his creator and maker; he violates the commands of the righteous governour of the world, who has a right to oblige us: for indeed sin is nothing else, but acting contrary to the commands of God.

5. And this great truth you have been taught from your very first entrance into christianity, that the end of Christ's coming into the world was to deliver us from sin, both in its reigning power and in its dreadful consequences: he having in his life given us a perfect example of a sinless obedience; and also expiated our offences by his blood; being put to death for sin tho he was guilty of no sin.

6. From whence it evidently appears that all they who are true followers of Christ, and have a right to the christian salvation, do forsake all manner of sin and iniquity; for let a man make what pretences to knowledge he pleases, if he does not abstain from all unrighteousness, and lead a holy and pure life, he knows nothing of the great design of christianity, nor can receive any advantage from it.

7. My dear children, do not suffer any pretences, how great soever, to any extraordinary light or knowledge, to impose upon you; if ye will be the disciples of Christ, you must steadily pursue the example he hath set you of universal righteousness and obedience:

8. For he who violates the laws of God is under the power of the

eth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.

7 Little children, let no man deceive you: He that doth righteousness, is righteous even as he is righteous.

8 He that committeth sin, is of the evil

devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: Whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning,

evil one: for the evil one having first transgress'd the laws of his creator, set himself to oppose that kingdom of holiness and righteousness which God is erecting in the world; and to this end has placed himself at the head of the human apostasy: and the great end of Jesus Christ's appearing in the flesh, was, to break this usurpation of the devil, and to restore the miserable and fallen race of man, to the favour of God, by calling them to obedience and virtue.

9. And whoever is by the gospel of Christ, (whose direct tendency is to purify the mind,) become a child of God, is thereby rescued from the power of sin; he does not suffer sinful habits to prevail: for that divine principle within, whereby he is denominated a child of God, prevents him; and whilst he attends to it, he cannot suffer himself to be led away by his sinful passions and appetites, but carefully conforms himself to the laws of his heavenly Father, into whose family he is taken.

10. For this is the great characteristic which distinguishes a child of God from a child of the devil; that he who does not sincerely obey the universal laws of righteousness and holiness has no title to the glorious character of being call'd a son of God: To which let me further add, that under the clear revelation that Christ has made, a sincere love of one another is absolutely necessary to entitle us to this character.

11. And indeed love has ever been a mark by which the children of God

God have distinguish'd themselves, from the children of the evil one :

12. *Cain* who, was from the first a wicked man, slew his own brother, (*Gen. iv. 8.*) and that for no provocation, but because he was a just and good man :

13. And the same temper of mind has been continued all along in the world ; which appears in the persecutions which good men have suffer'd in all ages ; the consideration of which should prepare you for the like sufferings, from the present wickedness of mankind, who still continue to act under the influence of the evil and malicious one.

14. This being the state of things ; every one may easily know under what power he is list'd : he who cultivates a disposition of universal love and goodness is rescued from the power of the devil, is entitled to the character of being a son of God, and has a right to immortal life : Whereas he who indulges a wrathful and malicious temper, belongeth to the evil one, and shall be destroyed with him.

15. And how reasonable this procedure is, appears from hence, that the natural consequences of wrath and hatred, are murder and destruction : and he who indulges a temper of mind, which can only fit him to be a destroyer, can't be qualified to live for ever.

16. Having thus plainly shown you what is the distinguishing character

that we should love one another :

12 Not as *Cain*, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother : And wherefore slew he him ? Because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren : he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer : and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of between

God, because he laid down his life for us : and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

between a child of God, and a child of the devil ; let me earnestly press you to perfect yourselves in this most excellent virtue of loving one another ; to which end let us always have in our minds the exceeding great love of God who gave his only begotten Son to die for us, that he might rescue us from the power of the devil ; and in conformity to Christ's example who laid down his life for us, we ought always to be ready to lay down our lives for the propagation of the christian religion, which so evidently tends to the happiness of mankind.

17 But whoso hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of *compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ?

17. And if you are thus to give up your lives for the love of the brethren, how much more ready should you be to part with the superfluities of this life to support and comfort those, who have need of them : for how can you pretend to be children of God, or that you love him ; when you refuse in any degree to imitate him in his love and goodness, which is the most amiable of all the divine perfections.

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

18. My dear converts, let us shew ourselves christians indeed, by following this great example which Christ hath set us, in doing all the good which lies in our power to one another ; and not satisfy ourselves with saying we wish our brethren well, whilst we give no proof of the sincerity of those wishes.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

19. This will determine us to be his disciples, and will make us in the day of judgment to stand before him with a holy boldness.

20. And

20. And of this be assured, that our approving ourselves to our own minds is absolutely necessary; for if we act contrary to what we know to be our duty, God who sees our hypocrisy will certainly condemn us:

21. But if, on the contrary, we endeavour to know the will of God, and practise accordingly; God who sees the sincerity of our hearts will not only accept and approve us, but will also afford us such a sense of his approbation as will support us under all the difficulties we are exposed to in this life,

22. And encourage us to hope for every needful benefit we ask of him; and that not only in those necessary assistances which he gives us, in our passage thro' this world, and in preserving us from the malice of the devil, and his more open followers; but also in delivering us by the aid of his Spirit, from those impostors which are now risen in the church itself: and these great favours he grants us, because he sees the sincerity of our hearts, with which we desire to obey his laws.

23. And what is the great law which he has enjoin'd to us, but this; that being convinced of the truth of the christian religion we should carefully study its precepts, and practise them throughout our lives? which that man will be found to do in the most perfect manner, who makes the greatest proficiency in this great and new commandment, given by our Lord himself, when he was about to die for us, of loving one another.

20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.

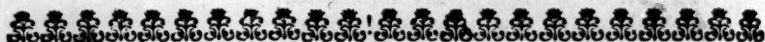
21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.

22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

24 And he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

24. In short, 'tis alone by obeying the laws of God that we become the children of God, and are entitled to all the blessings of the christian revelation; and that we have a right to all these blessings, we are assured by the sanctification of our hearts, by the good Spirit of God; whereby we are led to a steady obedience to all his laws, particularly that of loving one another.



CHAP. IV.

He exhorteth them to try who are true teachers, and who not, ver. 1. How they may be distinguish'd, 2. Sincere christians are preserv'd from delusions, 4. We ought to love one another, 7. The amazing instance of God's love to us in giving his only begotten Son for us, should prevail on us to cultivate that amiable disposition, 9. The happiness of those who do so, 12. There can be no true love of God, without the love of our brother, 20.

BEloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

MY dearly beloved, whom I have instructed in the doctrines of Christ, the truth of which has been confirm'd to you by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, keep steady to those doctrines, and suffer not yourselves to be turn'd from them by any pretenders to new and extraordinary light; but try the pretences of such persons, by those doctrines in which you have been so thoroughly instructed; which caution is necessary for me to give you, because there are several who under pretences

pretences of great and new discoveries go about to subvert the christian religion;

2. Of which I not only caution you, but give you this sure mark by which you will always be enabled to know which are from God and which not :

Every teacher who owns and propagates that Jesus is that Christ, who was promised to our forefathers, and in due time appear'd in our nature, and dwelt in a human body, and so truly became man and died for us ; that instructor is of God, as teaching those great truths which God has attested by innumerable miracles ; and are indeed the foundation of all God's gracious dispensations to a fallen world.

3. But every teacher who does not acknowledge as the *Messiah* of God, that Jesus who condescended to take upon him our nature, in order to accomplish our salvation, in whom all the prophecies of the *Messiah* were fulfil'd, is not authorized of God, but is a deceiver, and under the influence of that spirit of delusion, who is about to erect a power in opposition to Christ and his religion ; of which you have been so often caution'd ; which power I now tell you is already begun to be set up in the world.

4. But you, my dear converts, are enter'd into another and better society, of which God is the head, whereby you are become superior to the delusions of the evil one ; and it is impossible it should be otherwise if we behave as we ought to do, since the power under which we are

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God.

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God : and this is that *spirit* of anti-christ, whereof you have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them ; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

regulated,

5 They are of the world : therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God : he that knoweth God, heareth us ; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another : for love is of God ; and every one that

regulated, (which indeed is no less than the power of God) is so much superior to that of the evil one.

5. The views and interests of this evil power of which I am speaking are confin'd to this present world ; and all its endeavours tend only to the promoting the temporal advantages and gratifications of its followers ; and therefore all who place their happiness in this life eagerly listen to it.

6. Whereas the doctrines we teach, directly tend to break in upon our views of this life, and fix our happiness upon the favour of God in another state ; which is only to be attain'd by universal holiness, righteousness, and self-denial : therefore that man who attends to the nature of things, and considers the relation he stands in to the governour of the world, observing the reasonableness of the doctrines we teach, and the evidences we give of their coming from God, acknowledges our doctrine and yields obedience to its precepts : Whereas those who give themselves up to their lusts and passions, looking on our doctrine as contrary to their present happiness, reject us with contempt. So plain is the difference between the christian institution which consists in righteousness, holiness and truth ; and that diabolical Spirit which sets itself up in opposition to it, and consists of pride, unrighteousness, and cruelty.

7. Dearly beloved, seeing we are obliged to enter the combat with such a malicious and wicked power ; let it excite us to the highest degree of

of loving one another: which disposition of love, we who declare ourselves to be of the household of God ought to cultivate to the utmost, since love itself proceeds from God, whose children we profess ourselves to be; and it is by this disposition of love to one another, that you prove yourselves to be of the family of God, and have within your own breasts the comfortable assurance that he will acknowledge you, at the great day, as his dear children:

8. But as for them who do not cultivate this disposition of love and benevolence, whatever their other pretensions may be, God will not acknowledge them of his family; for God is the fountain and origin of love:

9. Which that he is, he has fully made appear by this amazing instance of goodness and mercy, *viz.* that when we had broken the laws of the righteous governour of the world, that he might save us from eternal death and destruction, and at the same time glorify his laws in the salvation of the sinner, he sent Jesus Christ his only begotten Son into the world, who dwelling in a human body, and becoming truly man, gave up his life for us.

10. This I say fully proves God to be the spring and fountain of love: for we were so far from loving God, that we were alienated and estrang'd from him, by sin and iniquity: it was therefore this principle of love in God, that made him to send his only begotten Son, and in his blood to erect a mercy-Seat for all, who

loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God

forlake their sins, and obey his laws.

11. Say now, my dear fellow christians, can you hear of this gracious dispensation of God's love to us, and not have your breasts enflam'd with the most intense love to one another?

12. Besides, in what manner would you express your love to God, (whom you neither have seen, nor can see; and to whom no one can be profitable by any action he is capable of doing,) but by imitating him, in your love to one another; by which you will demonstrate yourselves to be indeed the children of God, and that the revelation he hath given us, hath had its due effect upon you:

13. Which obedience to this most excellent law of love, proceeding from the influences of the good Spirit of God on your hearts, is a full proof that you are the children of God, and that he will own you as such at the great day.

14. And it's thro' the assistance of the same good Spirit, and from the same hope, that we apostles, cheerfully opposing all the devices of the wicked one, do publicly make known to the world those great truths, which we have both seen and known; particularly that God the supreme over all hath sent Jesus Christ into the world, that he might be the Saviour of mankind, and by his death restore them unto the favour of God;

15. At the same time assuring you, that whosoever acknowledges this great truth, that Jesus is the Son

Son of God, the true *Messiah* foretold by the prophets, who took flesh, dwelt among us, and died for us; and in consequence of such a belief yields obedience to his laws; God will receive him into his family and acknowledge him for his son.

dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16. The knowledge of this gracious dispensation of mercy and favour, by Jesus Christ, carries in it a full conviction of the love of God to mankind; and that God is the only true fountain and origin of love; from whence it undeniably follows that he who cultivates this disposition of love and goodness, is truly enter'd into the household of God, and stands in a filial relation to him.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us, God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17. And it is by imitating this divine pattern that our love is made perfect, by which we shall be enabled to stand before the judgment seat of Christ with unspeakable joy; because we have conform'd ourselves to that glorious example which the blessed God has set before us, in the great affair of our redemption, and imitated our Lord and Saviour, who after a life spent in acts of goodness and benevolence gave up his life for us.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18. Besides, that unspeakable joy which we shall then possess is no more than the natural consequence of love; for no one slavishly fears him whom he loves: therefore where love is perfected, there can be no room for fear; for fear is always accompanied with uneasiness, and every one endeavours to avoid what he is afraid of; whereas love always begets complacency and delight,

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment: he that feareth, is not made perfect in love.

with an earnest desire of the society of the person beloved: and therefore if we ourselves are perfect in our love, we shall not be fill'd with terror when God shall judge the world;

19 We love him; because he first loved us.

19. Because our very love to him flows from this principle, that he first loved us.

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

20. And if any man pretends that he really loves God, and at the same time hates and injures another, he gives the lie to all his pretences: nor can we by any other means evidence our sincere love to God, but by that tender love and regard, which we shew to our brother:

21 And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.

21. The truth of which not only appears from the reason of things; but we have also the express command of God for it, that whosoever pretends to love God, should evidence it, by his hearty and sincere love to his brother.





C H A P. V.

They who love God, love his children, and keep his commandments, ver. 1. How sincere christians overcome the world, 4. The testimony of God to the truth of our Saviour's mission, death, and resurrection, 6. We are concern'd to believe this testimony, and the happy effects of such belief, 10. Of the sin unto death, and of praying for one another in all cases except that, 16. The different state of God's people, and of the world, 18. Christ taught the true doctrine of God, 20. A caution against idolatry, 21.

1. **B**UT farther: every one who sincerely believes that Jesus is that Christ who was promised to our forefathers, and for our sakes became man and died for us, is by this faith entred into the family of God; and is properly become a Son of God by his conformity to him; the genuine produce of that holy faith: therefore every one who truly loveth God, cannot but love those who on the account of the same faith, being taken into the family of God, and adopted the children of God, are consequently his brethren; and that brethren should love one another, has been always acknowledged an indispensable duty, from the beginning of the world: how much more then should we love one another, when that character of brethren which we stand in is the most eminent, as being a much more durable relation, than any earthly one whatsoever?

1. **W**Hosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2. And

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments : and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ?

6 This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ ; nor by water only, but by water and blood : and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

2. And therefore, every man must find in himself this hearty and affectionate love for the children of God, who truly loves God, and sincerely obeys his commandments.

3. And indeed all pretences to any extraordinary zeal or love of God, but what are manifested by a faithful adherence to his precepts, are false and vain ; which precepts are so far from being harsh or severe, that they are, on the contrary, such as every wise and good man would chuse to be under.

4, & 5. I acknowledge that whoever will obey the commandments of God, and thereby acquire that excellent character of being a child of God, must renounce his interest in this present world, and must become superior to either the threats or allurements of it ; which superiority over this present world is not to be attained, but by the steady belief, that God by the death of Jesus Christ is reconciling to himself the sinful race of mankind.

6. Now that this Jesus Christ was a real man, and died, we have the utmost testimony ; for I myself, when he expir'd upon the cross, saw his side pierced with a spear, and blood and water gush out at the wound ; which are two determining proofs, that he really died : and what were all those miracles, which were wrought by the Spirit, which is no less than the Spirit of truth itself, but so many attestations that Jesus Christ rose from the dead ? which he could not have done, had he not first died.

7, & 8. We

7, & 8. We have therefore here most compleat evidence that Jesus Christ did truly become man, and die; and that by no less than three unquestionable testimonies, *viz.* the beforesaid Spirit, water, and blood; which all unite in one and the same evidence, namely, that Christ was truly man and died for us *.

7 For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost: and these three are one.

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth,) the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9. Now

* Whoever has read with impartiality the whole of what has been writ on both sides concerning the genuineness of this disputed passage, which in the text I have included in crotchets, (as many of our old *English* Bibles have it in a different character) will not, I believe, wonder that I have taken no notice of it in the paraphrase.

I am very sensible of the difficulty of the 6th, 7th & 8th verses, and therefore offer the following sense to the reader, and leave him to his own judgment.

Ver. 4. And by obeying these precepts we gain the most glorious victory over the present world, both in its allurements and in its terrors; and this victory we obtain by that faith in a world to come which our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed to us.

Ver. 5. Nor is there any way whereby we can gain a complete conquest over this evil world, but a firm and operative faith in Jesus, as the Son of God, and the deliverer who was to come; since 'tis he alone who has by his gospel set life and immortality in a clear and distinct light.

Ver. 6, 7 & 8. Now this most excellent person, who is no less than the Son of God, the *Messiah* promised to our forefathers, has demonstrated his divine authority by his behaviour under those innumerable afflictions which he past thro' in publishing his doctrines, and in giving up his life in attestation of them: Not only, I say, in enduring afflictions, but also in giving himself up to an ignominious and cruel death: thro' the whole of which and the succeeding period, the Holy Spirit, which is no less than the Spirit of truth itself, gave infallible evidence of his divine mission. So that we here see three undeniable witnesses, (to wit) the Spirit of truth itself attesting by innumerable miracles perform'd both during

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life: and this life is in his Son.

9. Now if the fullest evidence, which any human court of judicature requires in matters of the greatest importance, is the agreement of three witnesses, who are fallible men, and liable to be mistaken; how much more should we receive this evidence, equal in its number of testimonies, but much more certain and infallible; particularly that divine evidence given by the Spirit of truth, which ought to be consider'd as an attestation from God himself.

10. Nay further, he who with a sincere mind believes in Jesus Christ, has the truth of his being the Son of God manifested to himself, by the purification of his nature by the Spirit of God: whereas he who receives not this convincing evidence given by God himself, that Jesus Christ is the true *Messiah*, charges God with unfaithfulness, as having sent his Spirit to testify a falsity:

11. Which testimony is of no less importance, than that God has restor'd the lost and undone race of mankind to a state of favour and immortality: which state of favour and immortality is not to be obtain'd, but thro' Jesus Christ, whom God has hereby demonstrated to be

during his ministry, in his resurrection, and in the wonders and signs done by his apostles in confirmation of his doctrines; his patient behaviour, while he pass'd thro' a flood of afflictions, during the publishing his doctrines; and lastly, his submitting to the most painful death of the cross: all which unitedly witness to this great truth, that Jesus is the Christ, the promised deliverer which was to come.

N. B. Water is often used in the old testament for affliction. the

the promised *Messiah*, and Saviour of the world.

12. Therefore that man who believes in Jesus Christ as the Sent of God, and obeys his laws, is by the mercy of God entitled to eternal life: but the man who having it duly revealed to him rejects it, loses all his right to this gracious and merciful dispensation.

13. These things I write unto you, who have with sincerity embraced the christian religion; that considering the glorious immortality to which the gospel entitles all those who faithfully adhere to it, you may exert your utmost diligence to preserve yourselves from being deluded by these deceivers; who would pervert you from your faith in Christ Jesus: whom therefore you cannot be too careful to guard against; by preserving the faith in which you have been so well instructed, pure and uncorrupted;

14, & 15. Which faith in Christ is of the greatest advantage to us, since being reconciled to God by the blood of his Son, we have the comfortable assurance that we shall not be left destitute, even in this present state; and that if with humility and faith, we ask what is necessary for us, he will hear those petitions put up to him in the name of his beloved Son, and for his sake graciously grant the things we request of him.

16. Particularly, I have in commission to inform you, for your en-

12 He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

15 And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin cou-

which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

couragement to a steady adherence to the christian religion; that if any man, after he has by baptism obliged himself to the practise of its precepts, shall by breaking them bring down a temporal judgment upon himself, in that case I say the faithful shall pray to God for him, and the humble prayer of the faithful shall remove that temporal judgment, and God will forgive him; except the offence is of such a nature as renders him utterly unfit for any further communion with the church of Christ; as that man is, who being once convinced of the truth of christianity, shall afterwards dare to impute the great attestations God has given by his Spirit to the truth of it, to the evil one. * In such cases I have no orders to direct you to pray for them:

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

17. But in all other instances of disobedience (tho all disobedience is criminal and calls for God's just judgments both here and hereafter,) such is the exceeding mercy and goodness of God that he will graciously hear you and accept the penitent.

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God, keepeth

18. But as to that greater sin which you have no commission to pray for, that is of such a heinous nature, that no truly sincere christian can be guilty of it; and

* This I take to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, which I think could not be fully committed, till the last and highest evidence was given to christianity, in the various gifts of the Spirit after our Lord's ascension.

God who knows the sincerity of the heart will by his Spirit preserve all who love him from any such temptations, as might give the devil too great a power over them :

19. Which knowledge of the goodness of God to those who sincerely fear him, gives us an unspeakable comfort, while we are conscious to ourselves that we sincerely love God, and so shall be kept from this, and all other great sins. But you are not to wonder that a wicked world is subjected to, and enslaved by the evil one, who give themselves up to the conduct of their irregular passions and appetites, and so readily perform all that his rage or malice can prompt them to.

20. But for us who with sincere minds have embraced the christian religion, we know assuredly that Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God promised to the Fathers, is come in the flesh; and has in a clear and distinct manner made known unto us the will and pleasure of the one only true God and his Father: and by obeying his will, reveal'd to us by his only begotten Son, we truly become the Sons of God, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

This God, whom Jesus Christ has taught us to know, is the only true God; and it is he alone, who bestows eternal life upon the fallen race of mankind, thro' Jesus Christ,

himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness,

20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 Little children,
keep yourselves from
idols. Amen.

21. Therefore, my dear converts
to christianity, above all things,
keep yourselves from the worship
of idols; those false and fictitious
Gods, set up in opposition to the
only true God; which shall in a lit-
tle time perish and come to no-
thing; as shall all they who put
their trust in them.



A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

Second Epistle of St. John.

The salutation, ver. 1. The apostle's joy for christians walking according to the gospel, 4. Christians should love one another, 5. A caution against seducers, 7. How to behave towards them, 10. The conclusion, 12.

I JOHN, the antient apostle of Jesus Christ, to a lady * chosen in Christ Jesus to holiness and purity; and to her children; whom I truly love; and not only I, but all others, who have sincerely imbraced the christian religion.

THE elder unto the elect lady, and her children, whom I love in the truth: and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

* Some have thought that by the *Elect Lady* is meant a christian church, and suppose it to be some *Jewish* church, most probably that of *Jerusalem*, the mother of all churches; and the elect sister in the last verse to be some other church: but this being at best but a conjecture, I have preserv'd the word *Lady* in the paraphrase, and leave the reader to judge as shall seem to him the most probable.

2. Which

2 For the truth's sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever :

3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

2. Which hearty and sincere love we bear to you for your steady adherence to the pure precepts of the gospel, by which both you and we are at all times influenc'd, and which I doubt not we shall continue to obey for ever :

3. In which firm belief, with the most sincere affection and love, I implore, that the abundant favour mercy and peace which the one supreme God, and his true and only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord have manifested unto us, may perpetually rest upon, and remain with you.

4. It was an unspeakable pleasure to me, that in my travels for the spreading of the faith I met with some of your children whose lives were agreeable to the gospel of Christ, and who obeyed its most holy laws, with the same simplicity with which it was delivered to us by our Lord from the one supreme God and Father of all.

5. And now being fully perswaded of your faithful adhering to the truth, what I am chiefly solicitous about, and in the most earnest manner would recommend to you, is, the most careful practice of that great precept of christianity, which our Lord himself more immediately distinguished by naming it his new commandment, (to wit) the loving one another. Not that you are to look on it as a new commandment to you, it being that great law which you have been instructed in, from your very first entrance into christianity.

6. And

6. And indeed if you truly obey the laws of Christ, you must love one another; and you can't but remember that this precept was press'd upon you as absolutely necessary when you first became christians.

6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

7. But the reason of my reminding you of it at this time in so zealous a manner, is, that by your close adhering one to the other, you may the better avoid those seducers who now appear among you, and in great numbers endeavour to subvert the pure faith of Jesus Christ; and who are arriv'd to such a degree of impiety, as to deny the very foundation of the christian religion, (to wit) that the Word of God, the first begotten of the Father, by whom he made the worlds, did take to himself a human body and dwell among us: And I take this opportunity to assure you that whoever denies this, is a deceiver, and a forerunner of that antichristian power which is to arise in the world.

7 For many deceivers are entred into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8. Being thus timely forewarn'd, let me intreat you to be very careful that you be not perverted and turn'd aside from the pure and simple doctrines of the gospel, in which we have so diligently instructed you; but that constantly opposing these seducers you may attain a most exalted station in the *Messiah's* kingdom *.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

* Some antient versions and Fathers read all these verbs in the second person, viz. *ye lose* — *ye have wrought* — and *ye receive*. —

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God : he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed.

11 For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.

12 Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper and ink ; but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

9. But if you suffer yourselves to be seduced by these men from the doctrines of Christ you transgress his laws, and thereby renounce that dispensation of mercy, which God has given us by his Son ; whereas if you continue steadfast in the profession of his doctrines with a suitable practise, you become intitled to all the advantages of the christian salvation, and stand related to, and are enter'd into the society of the one God the Father of all, and his only begotten Son Jesus Christ.

10. Having thus carefully guarded you against these seducers, I shall only add, if any person shall come to you as a teacher of christianity, and yet shall deny that Christ became a real man by dwelling in a human body, don't so much as receive him into your house as an instructor, nor when he goes away wish him success in his ministry :

11. For whoever wisheth him success in his ministry, does thereby encourage him in his error, and partakes with him in propagating the imposture.

12. I have many other things to mention to you, but forbear writing them, because I hope it will not be long before I shall be able to make you a visit, when conversing together we shall be of the greatest advantage and comfort to one another.

13. The children of thy elect sister, chosen for her faithful adherence to the laws and doctrines of Christ, wish thee all spiritual blessings ; in which I also join.

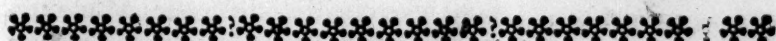


A

PARAPHRASE

ON THE

Third Epistle of St. John.



The apostle's affection to Gaius, and wishes for his prosperity, ver. 1. He rejoices, and commends him for his piety and hospitality, 3. We ought to relieve and assist pious and sincere ministers of the Gospel, 7. The ambition and uncharitableness of Diotrephes censur'd, 9. Evil examples are to be avoided, and good to be follow'd, 11. He witnesseth to the good behaviour of Demetrius, 12. The conclusion, 13.

1. **I** JOHN the antient apostle, to Gaius, beloved by all faithful christians; and whom I sincerely love, with the utmost affection.

2. My dear *Gaius*, my constant prayer to God is, that in all things you may prosper, and particularly that your body's health may be preserv'd for the good of the church, to an equal degree with that good temper of mind which you so carefully cultivate and improve:

1 **T**HE elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayst prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

T

3. For

3 For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5 Beloved, thou dost faithfully whatsoever thou dost to the brethren, and to strangers;

6 Which have born witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.

9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotre-

3. For it was an exceeding great pleasure to me, to hear from some christian brethren of your church, of your close adherence to the true doctrines of Christ, join'd with a universal obedience to all his laws.

4. There is nothing can give me a greater satisfaction than the hearing that all those whom I have converted to the christian religion, yield a sincere and diligent obedience to its commands.

5. And you, my beloved *Gaius*, in particular do approve yourself a true and faithful disciple of Christ, by that goodness and benevolence which you practise not only to the brethren of your own church, but also to such christian strangers whose travels for the propagation of the gospel have led them your way;

6. Several of whom have testified before us, of the great relief they have receiv'd from you: whom if you continue to assist as ministers of Jesus Christ, you will be highly approved.

7. And what makes this relief so much the more necessary, is, that these persons out of a true zeal for Christ and love to mankind, have refus'd to receive any assistance from their gentile converts.

8. It is therefore our greatest duty to aid and support such faithful servants of our Lord and master; by which we also shall become fellow labourers in so glorious a work; and consequently partake with them in the reward.

9. I wrote unto your church upon some important affairs, particularly the

the assisting of such as spent their time in propagating the gospel, but *Diotrephes*, who is a man of pride and ambition, has prevented those letters from having their proper effect.

10. I shall therefore when I make a visitation to your church, (which I design to do in a little time) I shall, I say, make use of my apostolical Power, and call him to a strict account for his wicked and unrighteous speeches against me; and which indeed were against Jesus Christ, whose apostle I am, and by whose authority I act. But he has not only treated me ill, but has also refus'd to entertain such of his christian brethren who have expos'd their lives for our common faith; and not only so, but has unjustly excommunicated and cast out of the church, such kind and benevolent persons who, contrary to his arbitrary injunctions, assisted and relieved them: for all which gross and scandalous enormities let him expect a just and righteous censure.

11. But, my beloved *Gaius*, do not you follow such a wicked example, but follow the example of kind and good men, which indeed is no less than the example of God himself, who is the kindest and best of beings: whereas the man who is proud and obdurate, how great or swelling soever his pretences may be, neither knows God, nor has any interest in him, but is truly a disciple and follower of the evil one.

12. As for *Demetrius*; his behaviour is such as gains him the applause of all who know him;

phes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words, and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church.

11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doth good, *is* of God: but he that doth evil, hath not seen God.

12 Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth and

itself: yea, and we
also bear record, and
ye know that our re-
cord is true.

13 I had many
things to write, but
I will not with ink
and pen write unto
thee:

14 But I trust I
shall shortly see thee,
and we shall speak
face to face. Peace
be to thee. Our
friends salute thee.
Greet the friends by
name.

and in a particular manner he is
esteem'd by all truly sincere and pi-
ous christians: I also recommend
him to you on my own knowledge;
which you know is to be depended
on.

13. I have a great many other
things to mention to you, but don't
think it so proper to write them:

14. But hope in a little time to
make a visitation to your church,
when we shall talk freely together;
in the mean time, I wish you all
manner of happiness. The brethren
who are with me desire affectionate-
ly to be remember'd to you; and
I also desire with the same affection
to be remember'd by name, to eve-
ry friend that is with you,



A

PARAPHRASE

O N T H E

General Epistle of St. Jude.

The salutation, ver. 1. The end of his writing was to press them to constancy in the profession and practice of the gospel, 3. The attempts of wicked seducers to pervert them made it necessary for him so to do, 4. He shews the danger of apostasy, and the miserable condemnation of those seducers, from the fearful examples of the unbelieving Israelites, 5. Of the fallen angels, 6. And of Sodom and Gomorrah, 7. The character of those vile deceivers, 8. Their dreadful condition, with a farther account of their character, 11. Enoch's prophecy of the last judgment, 14. Other marks of the foremention'd seducers, 16. The christians should remember that they were foretold by the apostles, 17. How christians should keep themselves in the love of God, 20. How they should behave towards those who had been perverted, 22. He concludes with a doxology, 24.

1. **I** JUDAS, the brother of James, set apart to the service of Jesus Christ, take this opportunity of writing to you, my brethren, who have been call'd by God to a life of holiness and purity, by the preach-

1. **J**UDE the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and
ing

preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:

ing of the gospel thro' the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit; and have in these sad days of corruption and apostasy preserved yourselves pure and blameless, faithfully adhering to the Doctrines, and diligently obeying the laws of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied.

2. I pray God you may be more and more qualified by a pure faith and a holy obedience, for the possessing in the most eminent degree, those unspeakable favours which he bestows upon us thro' Jesus Christ; which are no less than the merciful forgiveness of all our offences; the granting us that true peace of mind which flows from the assured hope of being approved by him, and the interesting us in that divine love, whereby we are taken out of this present evil world, and adopted the children of God; being set apart to be made possessors of an eternal inheritance, in the kingdom of his dear Son.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

3. My dearly beloved brethren, as I have with the greatest diligence wrote to you, that I might lose no opportunity of establishing you in the gospel; that obeying its pure and holy laws, you might be entitled to eternal life and felicity: So I think it no less necessary by this epistle, in this sad time of defection and apostasy from our most holy religion, earnestly to exhort you, in the most open manner to avow and defend the true doctrines of christianity in which you have been instructed by us; vigorously opposing those impious seducers who
endea-

endeavour to corrupt the simplicity of the gospel.

4. Which conduct is absolutely necessary at this time, when those antient prophecies begin to be fulfill'd, which speak of wicked seducers, who should arise in the church of God, perverting weak and unattentive persons from their fidelity; for which these deceivers shall, according to those predictions, receive the most severe and exemplary punishment: which persons are now risen in the church; men of wicked and depraved dispositions; who pervert God's dispensation of grace and mercy to mankind, the natural tendency of which dispensation, is to bring us to a true repentance for our faults, and a sincere amendment of our lives: Whereas they on the contrary, impiously pervert it to all manner of lewdness and impurity; whereby they renounce the one supreme God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and throw off their allegiance to Jesus Christ, whom God hath appointed Lord of all; and by whom he hath call'd us to holiness and purity.

5. And that you may be the more effectually stir'd up to oppose these most pernicious persons, suffer me to remind you of those instances of God's righteous judgments on such who have disobeyed him, which stand recorded in your sacred books, in which from your childhood you have been instructed: particularly, let me remind you of your forefathers; who, not attending to their miraculous deliverance from their

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

Egyptian

Egyptian bondage, nor to all those numerous proofs, which God afterwards gave them of his protection and presence, disbelieved his promise which he had made them, to establish them in the land of *Canaan*, and disobeying his command refus'd to go up against it, in order to take possession of it; for which disobedience, they were forever denied an entrance into it; and all of them died in the wilderness. In like manner all who have once known and embraced the christian revelation, and shall afterwards dare to despise and reject it, shall die in their sins and perish for ever.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

6. To which instance I may also add that of the fallen angels, who being possess'd of a great degree of glory and eminence; yet acting contrary to the laws they were under, were deprived of their dignity; and being shut up in a dark and dismal prison, are there confin'd in fearful expectation of that terrible punishment which they shall be sentenced to in the day of judgment, when they shall be condemn'd to unquenchable fire.

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

7. A like terrible instance of punishment by fire, you have in *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, and the neighbouring cities; who giving themselves up to every sensual and criminal desire, and being drown'd in even unnatural lusts, God made them an astonishing Example of his righteous displeasure, by pouring upon them a tempest of inflam'd brimstone, which utterly consum'd them; the dreadful effects of which judgment remain to this day.

8. Not-

8. Notwithstanding this sensible instance of the divine displeasure, these foolish and vain pretenders to supernatural discoveries, are guilty of all manner of impurities; are disobedient to the governments they are under, and blasphemers of superior orders of beings, of whom they are ignorant.

9. Which procedure is very different from that amiable example, so worthy our imitation, of that sublime and excellent Spirit, *Michael* the archangel; who in the dispute he had with the evil one about the body of *Moses*, notwithstanding the provocations he met with from that malicious and spiteful adversary, preserved an equal and composed temper of mind, and left it to God to determine between them.

10. Whereas these bold and impious persons rashly censure and speak evil of beings, who are not only superior to them, but quite remote from their knowledge; which were they not, they are so far from being qualify'd for making a judgment of them, that they know not how to make a right use of their own natural appetites, which were bestow'd upon us by God, for wise and good ends, who has endow'd us with reason and understanding, whereby we might guide and govern them; whereas they on the contrary, more depraved than the brute beasts, are swallow'd up in sensual and vile lusts, defiling themselves with all manner of impurities.

11. What a dreadful and miserable state have these ungodly persons plunged themselves into! and how

8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Wo unto them; for they have gone in the way of Cain, severe

and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gain-saying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

severe will be their punishment! who to accomplish their wicked purposes have, like *Cain*, seduced and destroy'd their brethren; and from covetous and greedy desires after the perishing riches of this world, have follow'd the example of *Balaam*; imposing on the unwary, turning them from the truth, and ensnaring them into the practice of base and abominable lusts; which they have performed by imitating *Corah* in their false pretences to knowledge, and supernatural light; and therefore shall perish in their impiety.

12. Diligently therefore beware of these dangerous deluders, who may fitly be compar'd to rocks under the water, which are destructive to the ignorant and careless mariner; for these when they are with you in your very feasts of charity which are design'd for the promoting of brotherly love and unity, are guilty of all manner of excess and riot; at the same time, exciting you to the like intemperance; and thereby make a prey of you, intirely subverting the kind end of your assembling together. What shall I compare these boasters to? They are like *clouds without water*, who deceive with vain hopes which end only in disappointment; *carry'd about of winds*, as being only under the government of their passions and appetites: *trees whose fruit withereth*; as having known the ways of God and rejected them: *without fruit*; as being entirely lost to all sense of virtue and goodness: *twice dead*; as having been once recover'd from

from a state of impiety and wickedness, and now deluged in it again: *pluck'd up by the roots*; and so being quite dead and senseless, it is impossible to recover them:

13. *Raging waves of the Sea*; so ruffled and discomposed by their irregular desires, that they are never easy but whilst they are running from one excess and madness to another; *foaming out their own shame*, as publickly boasting and glorying in their vices: *wandering stars*, as pretending to be instructors of others, yet themselves departing from the truth, deceive all who trust in them: *To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever*; And therefore they shall undergo the most severe punishment in the other state, and shall have allotted them for their portion, the hottest place in an inflam'd world; from whence they shall never escape.

14. And tho the character I have given of these impious persons is so black, that a kind and a good man, without the utmost evidence, could never be brought to think so hardly of his fellow creatures; yet this is no more, than what was predicted by the pious and holy *Enoch*, who lived so long ago, as to be but the seventh in a lineal descent from the first man *Adam*: who directs himself to these very persons, when he says, Behold ye impious and prophane men, the time is approaching, when the Lord will appear from heaven, attended by all his Holy Angels, and Saints, who fear him;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches*, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murderers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having mens persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ :

15. To judge and determine the future state of the whole human race : who will proceed, in so clear and equitable a manner, that all the wicked and ungodly shall stand convinced of the impiety of their actions, and shall own that all their atheistical suggestions, and bold charges, which they brought against the righteous Lord of the world, and his government, were unjust and detestable ; and the punishment to which they are sentenced but what they deserve.

16. But to proceed with their character ; if you look into their common behaviour, you will find them ever repining and discontented ; always objecting against, and finding fault with the methods of providence : uneasy at and complaining of their own state and condition in life ; enslaved by their lusts and appetites ; and at the same time attempting to enslave others, by their false pretences, and proud boasting of superior light and knowledge, as giving them a right to commit all manner of impiety : who will flatter and applaud you in the commission of the vilest actions, that they may make a prey of you ; all which exactly answers to *Enoch's* description of them.

17. But, my beloved in Christ Jesus, be you always arm'd against these seducers, nor suffer yourselves to be ensnared by them ; from whom you will be effectually preserved, if you carefully attend to what has all along been told you by the apostles of our Lord and Saviour :

18. For

18. For they inform'd you from the very first, that there would arise from among yourselves, bold and ungodly men, despisers of the grace of God; scoffers at a holy and religious life; men entirely devoted to their passions and appetites:

19. Which very persons these are, who boasting of great and supernatural knowledge, withdraw themselves from you, as being more spiritual, and every way superior to you; yet at the same time plunge themselves into all manner of lust and sensuality; and are so far from deserving the character of spiritual men, that the Holy Spirit of God has left them, and given them up to their own corrupt imaginations; who have render'd themselves entirely unworthy of his kind influences by their impurities.

20. But you, my beloved, strengthen yourselves in your most holy religion, by a careful and diligent examination of its pure doctrines, and a universal obedience to its holy precepts; and offering up your fervent prayers to God with humble and sincere minds for his protection, and every other needful blessing, according to the motions and influences of his Holy Spirit, whereby he dwelleth in you, and by which he will preserve you from the snares of these seducers:

21. Take great care to keep yourselves unblameable, that so you may continue the proper objects of the divine love and favour: to which end have your minds always fix'd on that amazing condescension

18 *How* that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

of

of our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for us, that being redeemed from all iniquity, we might be saved in the day of the Lord, and preserved to eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference :

22. And whereas God of his infinite goodness hath saved you from this dreadful corruption; let the sense of it possess your minds with the greatest tenderness and compassion to your unhappy brethren, who have been beguiled by these wicked seducers: To whom behave yourselves with prudence, and circumspection; making a difference between those, who have been betray'd thro' weakness, and simplicity, and those, who glorying in their impurities endeavour to seduce others: to the first shew the utmost pity, and tenderness; and by the softest treatment recover them to the ways of truth and purity :

23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

23. But for the others, rebuke them with severity, and lay before them the dreadful condition, to which they have reduced themselves, and from which there is no way of escaping, but by giving up all their false pretences, and renouncing all those impurities wherewith they have defil'd themselves, and into which they have betray'd others; whose case I can't better illustrate than by comparing them to a man surrounded with fire, who is glad to escape with his life, tho he loses all besides. By this procedure you will shew your righteous hatred of all impurity, and vindicate your most holy religion from all the reflections, which thro' their irregularities have been thrown upon it.

24. Now

24. Now to the one supreme God who is able to preserve us from all those temptations by which we are endanger'd in this state of probation, and to make us perfect in every good disposition and habit; that so we may be approv'd by him when we come to stand before that glory which shall be reveal'd in the day of our Lord, and may then have our minds filled with inconceivable joy:

25. To this only wise God who hath redeem'd us to himself by the blood of his only begotten Son, be the highest ascriptions of *glory*, arising from the wonderful combination of all his perfections; of *majesty*, as exceeding all thought, and to be approach'd with the utmost reverence, resignation and purity; of *dominion and power*, as being peculiar to that one omnipotent being, whom it is in vain to oppose or resist; and to whom universal submission and obedience are due, both now and through eternal ages. Amen.

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

25 To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

E R R A T.

Page 8. line 6. of the paraphrase, for but read without.

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vide another leaf, 65 long's tellin
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